The Legendary JULIE SCHWARTZ–Architect of the Silver Age!

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

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August 1997

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ON THE COVER: Murphy Anderson's Silver Age sci-fi recreation painting of **Strange Adventures #119.**
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**Photo credit: Special thanks to John L.Coker for his great Julie Schwartz photographs!

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My Number One Hero!

I was seven when I bought *Showcase* #4 (my first comic) off the highest shelf of the rack at Corrin Drug store here in Coronado. I went berserk for this "new" sci-fi character, Flash, but was confused by the *Showcase* numbering. (For years the only issues I could find were "Flash" #4, 8, 13, 14, 105, and 106! Where were the rest?)

Then the tidal wave of new DC entries began in earnest... Green Lantern, JLA, Atom, Adam Strange, and Hawkman were all my instant favorites. That first half-decade of the Silver Age inextricably changed the industry, the reading habits of an army of kids, and me... forever. I noticed that all my favorite titles and characters seemed to share similar qualities. They all had "hook" covers of one sort or another. They all contained stories based on science and science fiction. And most importantly, they all portrayed the idea that super powers and a colorful suit didn't always prevail... and that the key elements of winning were morality, perseverance, and (most of all) intelligence.

Then in the early 1960s I first became aware of the name Julius Schwartz. I was standing around Bert Blum's comic loft at Cherokee Book Store (in Hollywood) when two older collectors, Chuck McCleary and Rick Durrell, asked "Who's your number one hero?"

Without a moment's hesitation I rattled off, "Oh that's easy... Barry Allen, the Flash!" Rick replied, "That's a Julius Schwartz edited title like *Strange Adventures* and *Mystery In Space*. Schwartz is also over Green Lantern, Atom and Hawkman. He's the one who revived the characters... did you know there were original versions of them in the 1940s?"

Rick then proceeded to pull *All-Flash* #1 off the shelf just above Bert's head... "see, here's what The Flash used to look like."

The room began to spin as my short gasps moved me to the edge of hyperventilation. My pre-teen brain began a meager effort to sort through this major revelation... "there was another, older Flash? Wow... did that mean there was an older Hawkman, Green Lantern, and Atom? Was there a precursor to the Justice League of America? And most importantly... who was this fabled Julie Schwartz person... apparently responsible for every character and title I hold dear?" I had to know more!

My quest for knowledge led me to an early fanzine, *Rocket's Blast ComiCollector*. There, writer Don Thompson explained even more about this esteemed DC editor. Seems there was the "first heroic age" (the Golden Age) and the "second heroic age" (the Silver Age) and editor Julie Schwartz was "the brains" behind the Silver Age incarnation of DC heroes. I finally understood!

My young mind went numb with realization as the relationship between the old and the new became crystal clear! Everything I cared about and loved in comics... every title and character... every plot and panel... could be traced back to just one man–beyond pencils, inks, colors, stories, titles and characters... there was a single unifying presence in them all and his name was Julius Schwartz. I didn't know what he looked liked or how he dressed... or even how he talked. I only knew that what he did was incredibly important to me! I could quote dialogue, recite Green Lantern's oath by heart, tell the plot of every story by just looking at the cover. I was a Schwartz "kid-disciple" preaching the gospel of Silver DC, now secure in the knowledge that the world was in good hands... Julius Schwartz' hands!

Now, almost four decades later, I still feel that same sense of wonder and still get shivers up and down my spine when I gaze upon those first historic Silver DC revivals in *Showcase* and *Brave & Bold*. But most of all, I think of the man who made it all possible... Julius Schwartz! What a pleasure it is to dedicate this 50th issue of *CBM* to him!

After all these years Julie, you're my number one hero...
and you always will be!

Gary

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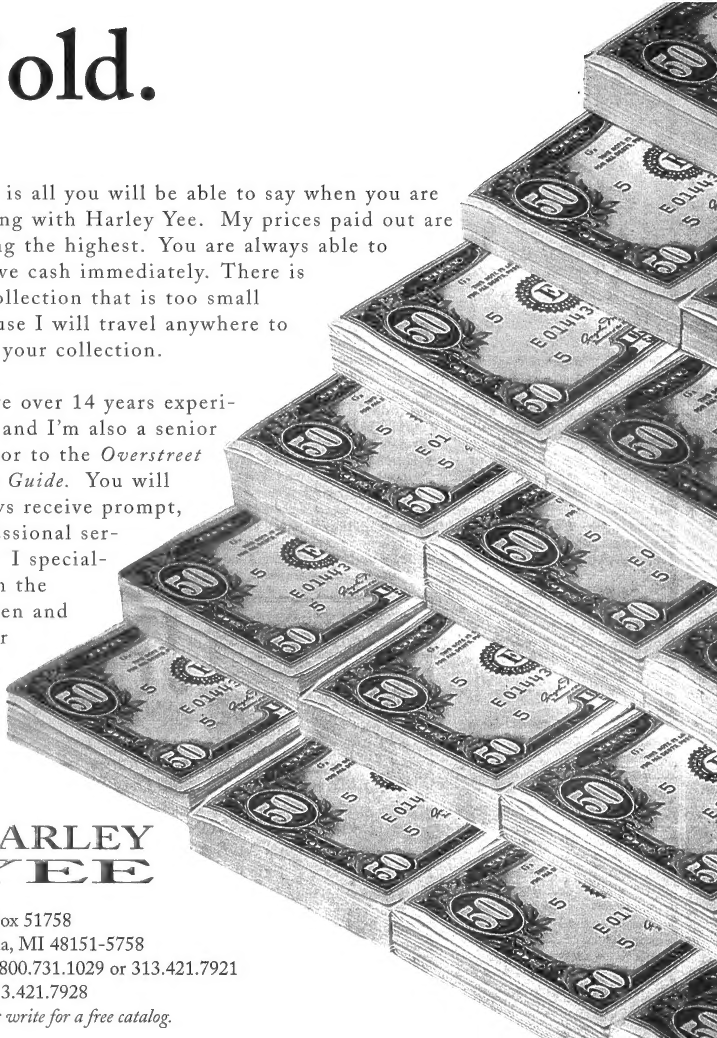

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Trim a bit

Unfortunately, I'm due to be 'downsized' out of my job this summer, but I could no more get by without your fabulous publication each month than… well, food and water. So I trim a bit off the family budget by eating peanut butter sandwiches for lunch… I've got to continue receiving Comic Book Marketplace.

Bob Raggi, West Virginia

Your tale of woe did not fall on deaf ears! As a reward for your unwavering loyalty to CBM, we are forwarding with all haste the first (and only) official jar of CBM peanut butter!

Big Bang Acknowledgments!

Because of the limited editorial space in my article in this issue (see "The Big Bang Theory of Comic Book History") I thought perhaps your letter column might be a good place to thank all the folks (both living and deceased) who contributed to and inspired the research effort.

Thanks to: the late Jerry Siegel, the late Joe Shuster, the late Bill Gaines, the late Sam Moskowitz, and my friend, the late Gary Coddington, Jack Williamson, Forrest J. Ackerman, Alex Schomburg, Conrad H. Ruppert, Charles Hornig, David A. Kyle, Bill Blackbeard, Richard Lupoff, Jerry Bails, Harlan Ellison, Jim Steranko, Shel Dorf, Ron Graham, Russ Cochran, Larry Ivie, Jerry DeFucchio, Paul Levitz, Roger Hill, Guy H. Lillian, III, John L. Coker III, Chuck Wooley, Will Murray, John Snyder, Jerry Weist, Pat Calhoun, Gary M. Carter, Kent Lane Carter, Mike Benton, Bill Schelly, Mark Edmonds, Lee Randall (special thanks to Lee for early Jerry and Joe stuff), Mike Catron, Ted White, Sol Davidson, Henry Mietkiewicz, cat yronwode, and "Living Legend" Julie Schwartz for invaluable assistance and research involving various aspects and concepts that went into the formulation of this essay.

Thanks for the enthusiastic input I received from all I questioned regarding aspects of this quest. Double thanks to Julie and kudos to Pat Calhoun and John L. Coker, III for the honor of having all three of them edit my manuscript. I dedicate the article to Sam Moskowitz.

Robert Beerbohm, Nebraska

Adkins' corrections!

My most sincere apologies to Mr. Dan Adkins, one of the leading lights of '60s comics art. I fear that I paid too much credence to fan gossip (of a bygone era) and indulged in some speculation without quite stopping to think exactly what I knew for a fact.

I am delighted that Mr. Adkins wasn't, as I had erroneously written in my article on Wallace Wood, another martyr to the cause of cool art. The gossip back then was that his solo auteur project, Starhawk, was scratched because suddenly Stan didn't love him any more. I am overjoyed to learn that the exact opposite was true, and that Dan was evidently promoted out of the grueling gruntwork grind of drawing monthly books, into an editorial position instead.

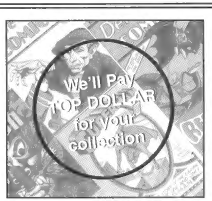
Dan Adkins is wrong on one count, however: his penciling was never below average. His work, especially on Dr. Strange, but also on Gold Key's Fantastic Voyage (and I pray I have my facts right THIS time) which was mostly penciled by him, show a graceful and abstract sense of form and composition that extends beyond the human figure to modernist shapes of pure design. Very cool stuff, and by no means inferior to his excellent inking.

Link Yaco, New York

Mad paperbacks update

This note is in response to your reply in CBM #48 to Rolf Gerdau re: Mad Paperbacks. While it is true that the five Ballantine titles contained reprints of the comics (Mad 1-23), it is also true that the first two Signets, The Bedside Mad & Son Of Mad, do as well. Actually Son Of Mad is a hybrid of comic and magazine reprints paving the way for The Organization Mad which is all magazine reprints. I know it's a minor point in the overall history of comics, but to a serious Mad Paperback collector as myself, it carries major weight, especially when one considers that even though Kurtzman was editor of Mad, the above titles are listed as William M. Gaines'...

(Continued on page 10)



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Joel Thingvall, gen. mgr.

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One can deduce a minor league power play or a bit of politics at work in the exercise of ownership of Mad. It is details like those that sometimes make collecting an interesting research project.

Also, I want to commend you for the fine magazine you publish. I have been a reader since issue one and guard my complete run of CBM like any other major reference text in my library. "MIT MY LIFE!!!

And in your response to Mr. Peetz re: Overstreet's Advanced Collector/Golden Age Quarterly/Golden & Silver Age Quarterly, I consider them essential to the CBM run as I designate them issues 21a-f. Thanks for creating a magazine truly worth looking forward to and continued success. Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Goodman, California

Beware CBM Readers

Just wanted to drop ya'll a line and tell everyone how much I enjoy a magazine for comic fans above the age of puberty! For this long-time DC war collector, CBM #47 was a true gem!

I would like to add my two cents worth to the great articles published in that issue: A great book to show fans who haven't gotten into the DC war comics is Our Army At War #235 - in order, it contains a fantastic Sgt. Rock Heath story (complete with a full-page side-view panel!), a Glanzman kamikaze tale, a Civil War story by Toth, and wraps up with a Heath reprint and a Kubert reprint. Not bad for a few buckaroos, buckaroo!

Mick Rabin sure hit the nail on the head when he mentioned Brave And Bold #52 as a very tough book in any grade above fine–hey, Mick, I'm still looking, too!

Another classic war story often missed is Showcase #54–if you think a GI Joe story won't cut the mustard, skip the splash page and check out Kubert's "Blind Night Fighter," the coloring alone is worth the price of admission! In fact, this issue is easily in my top ten of all time for Kubert art (just my opinion, you understand...).

Mick is also correct in praising Our Fighting Forces #146 for the classic Toth story "Burma Sky"–I would add Star-Spangled #164's "White Devil, Yellow Devil" as another masterpiece rarely praised, but the irony can be cut right off the page!

Lessee, what else? Oh yeah, Greg Pharis' list of top ten covers sure was fun–I'll let other fans argue over whether he's right or not, but would suggest your readers check out Our Fighting Forces #20 (if you're lucky enough to find a copy!)–that book gets my vote for greatest grey-tone/wash-tone cover ever! Amazing work...

Also, Greg was quite observant in mentioning Kubert's knack for making the enemy, especially Nazis, look ferocious–check out Our Army # 159 for a couple of very *(Continued on page 12)*

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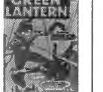

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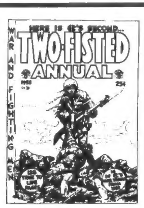

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mean-looking mothers!

I would like to end on a personal word of warning to your readers–several years ago at a comic con I purchased a run of Star-Spangled War Stories from an individual–these issues were the now-classic Enemy Ace appearances, and I bought the books only because I remembered my brother and myself buying them off the stands many moons ago. We've all done this before, right? "I remember these! It would be fun to re-read these stories and see if they're still any good"...well, Enemy Ace led to the dino stories, which led to Sgt. Rock, which started a cycle I'm sure you can all guess at this point! So what's the point?

If anyone thinks the stories and art don't hold up over time, BEWARE! Now I often wonder if I'll ever finish this project (sigh...)–so many issues, so little cash....

Anyway, keep up the great work at CBM! I always look forward to learning new things about our hobby in each issue!

PS–let me know if you are still looking for fan boys interested in writing for CBM - I must admit I would love to contribute!

Bill Howard, California

Grading Consensus

I would like to comment on the interesting letter by Bill Howard in the Speak Out section of CBM #48. As Bill Howard stated, publication followed by challenged inquiry is the only way to arrive at a consensus for grading. Grading, along with undisclosed restoration, are the two plagues of the comic collecting hobby. I will not pay attention to any grading system which describes the comic's grade numerically. Grading is a very subjective process, and thus I believe it to be inherently qualitative. Thus grading in non quantitative and very non scientific.... Take a comic with a two inch tear that would otherwise be near mint (sorry Bill Howard). What would its numerical grade be? How would the number change as a function of the size of the tear? Does it have to change in integral values? What if the tear is on the front cover? Would the number be the same if it were on the back cover? (Personally, I believe that the back cover flaws are not as severe as front cover flaws, but this is subjective.)

And what if the tear was on an internal page? Should the numerical grade be the same for all situations just described? Well, it depends upon who is grading the *(Continued on page 15)*

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comic and because of this there can be no absolutes when grading a comic.

OK, let's say that you believe in a numerical grading system. Let's say that the lowest near mint is a 90 and the highest very fine is an 89. There is no reason to preclude non integral numbers in my opinion, especially when a book is graded by a committee. (How does Sotheby's handle this? Do they round the number?) Averaging is one way to create non integral numbers. What do you call a book that grades 89.5? Books like this must exist.

If there is a book that is a VF+ and another copy that is a Near Mint-, then there must exist a hypothetical copy that is better than the VF+ but not as good as the Near Mint-. In fact, theoretically, there can be an infinite number of books that grade between VF+ and NM- because there are an infinite number of numbers between 89 and 90. Thus a split grade VF/NM just describes a book better than VF+ but not as good as NM-. Actually, VF/NM is a misnomer; it should really be VF+/NM-. Yes, split grading is often abused, but I will argue that there is equal abuse in non-split grading as well. How do you feel about the infamous FN- grade? These books always turn out to be VG+ in my eyes. The same goes for the dreaded VF-. Always seems like a FN/VF to me.

Or what about those books graded FN++ or even worse FN+++? I have seen as many as four plus marks by a grade. But have you ever seen two to four minus signs as a grading suffix? I never have. So what is the difference between a split grade FN/VF and a non-split grade FN++? I'll take the split grade any day.

Phil Carpenter, California

Compliments on Wally Wood issue

Wanted to pass on my compliments to you and your staff on the recent Wally Wood issue of CBM (#44). It's one of the best issues of any fanzine that I've ever seen, and I've been collecting comics since 1972. I did however, notice one small error of attribution. On page 46 of that issue, the caption credits "Clawfang the Barbarian" to Wood, when it is, in fact, the work of Al Williamson. If you have a copy of James Van Hise's excellent The Art of Al Williamson, consult that and you will see that I am correct here. Am I the only one who noticed this?

Steve Ringgenberg, Arizona

I'll add your name to the roster of the many CBM readers who noticed the incomplete caption. It was supposed to say "Clawfang the Barbarian, written by Wood, art by Al Williamson." Glad you enjoyed CBM #44... seems a goodly number of CBM readers shared your sentiments about the issue. Speaking of praise, your contributions to CBM have not gone unnoticed and are enjoyed and appreciated by all. *(Cont. on page 72)*

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(mod. rest.)
#79 appt. FN..... $495

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#4 GD- $400
(1 pg loose)
#7 GD $325
#9 GD+ $400
#54 VG- $300

All Winners Comics
#3 FR $200
(binder holes)
#5 FN/VF $900
(has VF/NM app but soil, crease on cvr)

Amazing Spider-Man
#14 VG/FN $425
#25 VF $135
#25 VF/NM $325
#30 VF/NM $200
#35 VF $90
#38 VF/NM $200
#44 NM $180
#45 NM+ $200
#51 VF/NM $200
#62 NM- $55
#64 NM $65
#67 NM+ $65
#75 NM $60

Aquaman
#16 FN $30
#18 VF- $50
#22 FN $25
#23 FN+ $30
#39 FN+ $30
#40 FN $25
#41 FN $12
#42 FN+ $15
#43 VF $20
#44 FN $12
#45 VF- $18
#49 FN+ $15
#50 VF $20

Atom
#7 VF/NM $250

Avengers
#5 NM- $350
#8 NM- $275

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#92 VG+ $150
(Aurora)
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#243 VF/NM $25
#243 NM- $30
#244 VF/NM $25
#244 NM- $30
#245 NM- $35
#251 NM $85

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(1st Capt. Flag)

Capt. America
#18 FN+ $1,350
#100 VF+ $225
#100 VF/NM $250
#109 NM $75

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#6 NM $45
#23 NM $40
#24 NM $35

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#2 VF $2,200
(Mille High)

Danger Trail
#1 VF- $925
#3 FR/GD $250

Detective Comics
#1 appt. VG/Fine $25,000
(mod. rest. to cvr)
#36 FN+ $2,850
(cvr cleaned)
#37 VF- $3,700
(very minor repair)
#66 NM- $3,000
(cvr cleaned)
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#400 VF/NM $85
#407 NM- $35
#408 NM- $30

Fantastic Four
#5 VF- $1,450
#25 NM- $575
#41 VF/NM $75
#48 NM $1,200
#49 VF+ $200
#53 NM- $90
#65 NM- $55
#72 VF/NM $40
#78 VF/NM $30
#84 VF/NM $25
#85 VF/NM $25
#88 VF/NM $25
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#17 VF/NM $400
#18 VG $100
(chew bk cvr)

Flash Comics
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#45 VF/NM $80
#76 NM- $200
#77 VF+ $40
#78 NM- $40
#79 NM- $35
#80 NM- $32
#80 NM $40
#81 NM- $30
#82 VF+ $27
#83 NM- $30
#84 NM- $30
#85 NM $45
#86 NM $45
#87 NM $40
#89 NM $20

Haunt of Fear
#4 FN- $225

House of Secrets
#92 VF $400

Inc. Hulk
#2 VF/NM $3,650
#6 VF+ $1,700
#102 VF/NM $125
#102 NM $150

Justice League
#9 VF/NM $300
#21 FN+ $165

More Fun Comics
#51 appt. VG/Fine $25,000
(Scarce)
#54 appt. FN $2,200
#98 VG/FN $225

Mystery in Space
#68 VF $115
#69 VF+ $140
#70 VF- $80
#71 VF+ $140
#72 VF $80
#74 VF $80

Nick Fury
#1 NM $50
#3 NM $35
#5 NM $35

Nickle Comics
#4 VF/NM $1,200
(Allentown)
#8 FN+ $400

Our Army at War
#128 VF+ $250
#158 NM- $75

Pep Comics
#17 FR/GD $300
(1st app/Orig Hangman)
#18 FR/GD $85
#19 GD- $75

Phantom Lady
#15 VF- $1,250
(Aurora)
#17 VG/FN $2,500
#18 VF $1,150
#20 FN+ $700
(Aurora)
#22 VG $300
(Aurora)

Phantom Stranger (1st)
#2 FN- $425
(Aurora)
#3 VG/FN $350
(Aurora)
#6 VG $200
(Aurora)
#1 (2nd) VF/NM $60

Sgt. Fury
#13 VF $200

Sheena
#18 VG+ $90

Showcase
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#100 NM- $20

Silver Streak Comics
#13 GD/VG $135

Silver Surfer
#1 NM $650
#2 NM- $225
#2 VF+ $125
#7 VF+ $50
#8 NM- $60
#10 NM- $60
#11 VF+ $40
#12 NM- $45
#12 VF $30
#13 VF+ $37
#14 VF $40
#14 NM- $90
#16 VF+ $40
#17 VF+ $40

Spectre
#1 VF- $65
#2 VF $50
#3 NM $80
#4 VF+ $65
#7 VF/NM $35
#8 VF/NM $35
#9 VF/NM $35

Star Spangled War Stories
#98 FN $55
#115 FN+ $45
#116 FN+ $40
#117 FN $30
#118 FN+ $35
#119 FN $30
#120 VF- $55
#121 FN $30
#122 VG+ $20
#123 VG/FN $25
#132 FN+ $40
#135 FN+ $50
#136 FN+ $50

Startling Comics
#48 VF $425

Strange Adventures
#9 VF $900

Strange Tales
#157 NM- $80

Sub-Mariner Comics
#20 VF $700
#35 FN $250

Superman
#4 VG+ $1,250
#7 FN+ $1,300
#32 VF $800

Swamp Thing
#1 NM $75
#2 VF/NM $30
#8 NM $20
#9 NM- $15
#10 NM- $15

Tales from the Crypt
#30 FN $135

Tales of Suspense
#11 VG+ $80
#31 GD+ $40
#34 GD $25
#39 VF $2,800
(cvr cleaned)
#60 VF/NM $100
#66 NM $200
#80 NM $80
#83 NM $60
#92 NM $50
#98 NM $50

Tales of the Unexpected
#43 VG+ $225
#45 VG+ $60
#46 VG/FN $70
#47 FN+ $100
#48 VG+ $42
#50 VG+ $42
#54 FN+ $50
#55 FN $40
#58 FN $55
#59 FN $55
#60 FN/VF $68
#62 FN- $45
#64 FN $45
#65 FN/VF $65
#67 FN/VF $65
#68 VF+ $50
#97 FN+ $22
#98 VG/FN $14
#100 VG+ $12
#101 FN/VF $20
#102 FN/VF $20
#103 FN+ $17
#104 FN $15

Tales to Astonish
#3 VG+ $100
#5 GD $65
#10 GD $35
#14 GD $30
#25 VG $50
#35 VF $1,100
#49 VF/NM $200
#50 NM- $250
#63 VF+ $50
#65 NM- $70
#89 VF/NM $40

Thor
#136 VF/NM $45
#137 VF+ $40
#138 NM- $50
#158 NM $80
#161 NM+ $30
#162 VF+ $25
(tear cvr/bk)
#162 NM $50
#165 NM- $75
#166 NM- $60
#169 NM- $50

Thrilling Comics
#68 VF/NF+ $300
(Aurora)
#71 NM $600

Unexpected
#105 FN+ $10
#106 FN $9
#109 FN $9
#113 FN $10
#115 FN $8
#116 FN+ $12
#117 FN $8
#119 VF $15
#120 FN/VF $12
#124 FN+ $12
#125 FN/VF $12
#128 FN/VF $12
#131 FN/VF $10
#132 VF $15
#134 VF+ $20
#135 FN/VF $10
#136 VF $15
#138 FN/VF $10
#142 VF/NM $10
#143 VF/NM $15
#144 NM $20
#146 VF+ $15
#147 VF $10
#148 VF/NM $15
#149 VF $10
#150 VF $10
#151 VF $10
#152 VF/NM $15
#153 VF $10
#154 VF/NM $15
#155 VF+ $15
#156 VF/NM $15
#157 VF $12
#158 VF $12
#159 VF- $10
#162 VF- $10

X-Men
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#52 VF $45
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#2 NM $300
(very minor cvr t at corner)

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Chilling Tales!

By Pat S. Calhoun

Chilling Tales enjoyed a five-issue run from December 1952 through October 1953–at the very peak of the horror/fantasy comic book boom. Of course it had already been a horror/fantasy title since the shift from *Captain Science* to *Fantastic*, with issue #8 in February 1952. After two issues of *Fantastic* and three issues of *Beware*, it became *Chilling Tales* with issue #13. The publisher was a company called Youthful, one of the many spin-off companies of the boom years.

Chilling Tales #13 marked the first appearance of Matt Fox's work for Youthful–with the first of his three "Chilling" covers and his only story art. Fox had painted some covers for the legendary *Weird Tales* pulp in the mid and late 1940s and had a real affinity for the genre. His comic book drawing-with its heavy linework, intricate crosshatchings, and towering imagination, bears a favorable resemblance to the definitive fantasy comic art that Basil Wolverton was producing at this time. There is a luminous clarity to Fox's work–on #13's cover; the worm crawling through the skull, the plant wrapping around the headstone, and the exaggerated intensity of the wood grain on the broken coffin boards–are details that add richness to the stylized graveyard scene of a demon reviving a corpse.

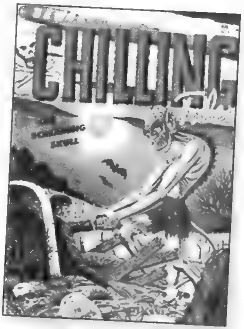
Inside, "The Screaming Skull" starts things off with a familiar but still somewhat amusing fable of bones that bite. Art is by Harry Harrison–before he became a science fiction writer. Next comes the Matt Fox yarn, "The Hand of Glory." It's an old-fashioned but enjoyable seven-pager about this weird device, the hand of a hanged man holding a candle made from the fat of a human heart, that–when lit–puts all people around it but the possessors into a trance. The one catch is that blood can put the flame out, and when two crooks start using the hand for a crime spree it's inevitable that one will cut himself during a heist and bleed on the hellish hand, and after that it gets pretty gory.

"Pursued" might be the standard "crook-kills-partner-for-loot-but-dead-man's-ghost-haunts-him" plot, but it's done with a tight script and snappy art by Vic Carrabota. The book wraps up with a spooky spider story that's a good match of creepy art and creepy content.

Chilling Tales #14 (February 1953) is the least exciting issue of the run, but–even so–it's a pretty good pre-Code horror comic. The first story is the first of many classic adaptations-one of the hallmarks of the run. This issue's offering loosely translates into a comics short story–Samuel Coleridge's long lyric poem, "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." This might be Harrison's work–in both writing and art (as well as a tale in #15 that's inspired by a 19th-century story). It's an intriguing concept, and the moments that borrow the mood of Coleridge's mystical magnum opus are deep and satisfying.

This auspicious opening is followed by "The Smell of Death," which is a pretty good read–about a boy whose only excitement comes from being close to a corpse–that profits from the clean and colorful narrative power of Vic Carrabota's art. Things start to wind down with "Don't Wear That Suit," a grade-C chestnut, and "The Snake Pit"–which is a little better, if only for a mildly interesting psychedelic dream sequence.

Chilling Tales #15 (April 1953) features the second of Matt Fox's triumphant triptych of *Chilling* covers; it's superb and suggestive with four fiends about to hang a human. The opening tale displays an array of 19th-century sources. "The Hounds of Hell" title hails from "The Hound of Heaven," a turn-of-the-century poem (that's a "knock off" of Hopkins' "Wreck of the Deutschland"), and the story is a medieval fable of a nobleman who's a famed hunter–till the night he hunts with the devil and his henchmen. The scene of the flaming stag perched on an overlook above the ghastly hunters shows that the writer (Harry Harrison?) was inspired by Gustave Flaubert's "Legend of Saint Julian." Flaubert's tale is also of a nobleman who is a mighty hunter until a supernatural turnaround–heralded there as in the comic–by the appearance of a stag bathed in flame. The scene in Flaubert's original where all the animals of the forest perform a threatening dance around the helpless hunter is a highlight of an opulent masterpiece by one of the key figures of 19th-century fantasy, and "The Hounds of Hell" is an enthralling eight-pager.



The "first issue" of Chilling Tales (#13, Dec 1952) features a Matt Fox graveyard scene cover. This is the only one of the five-issue run that also contains a Matt Fox-drawn story.

The middle of the book contains a couple of torpid tales, but the final story, "Sacrifice!," scores points for a terrific twist ending that makes another dizzy dream sequence into something more.

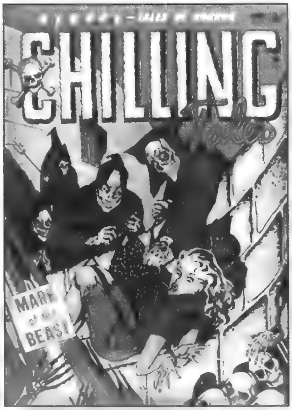
Chilling Tales #16 (June 1953) is a good ish with a nice horror cover. The opener is an adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's "Mark of the Beast"–a classic transformation tale of Colonial India and a hoodooed human who changes into a creature. Art on this winner is ably provided by old pro H. C. Kiefer. The second story confirms the book's standing as one of the more desirable pre-Code horror books: "The Curse of Metzengerstein," adapted from a story by Edgar Allen Poe.

This little drama of murder and ghostly vengeance is swift and to the point, and the art is outstandingly expressive. The scene where the mad baron laughs at the news of his neighbor's death (by a fire which Metzengerstein started in the stables) is a marvelous portrait of a soul that has succumbed to a fatal dementia.

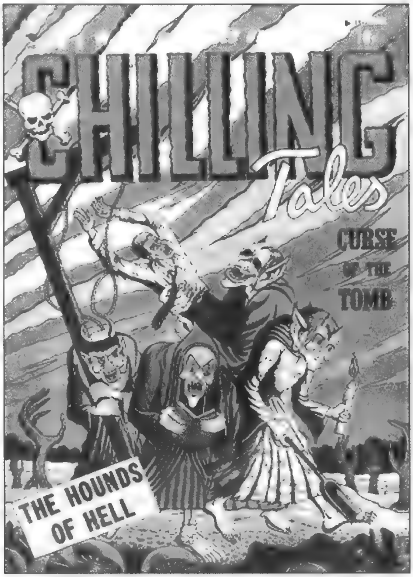
"The Creeping Hand" is summed up by its title but goes down smooth enough as does the finale, "The House of Greed." It seems like every horror title had to occasionally rewrite the old fairy tale of an evil king devoured by rats, and this version has a charming inevitability—bon appetit!

Chilling Tales #17 (August 1953) closes the run in style. The Matt Fox cover is a crescendo of horror, with a host of demons writhing under the gruesome grip of a black mass. The first story is "a horror classic by Sir Walter Scott," "Wandering Willie's Tale." It's a lurid clash with Satan that's done to a "highland" turn, with art and perhaps adapting honors again going to Barry Harrison. The second story is real run-of-the-mill, but momentum is regained quickly when the third yarn reveals itself to be a graphic transmogrification of Poe's "Manuscript Found in a Bottle." Told without any dialogue, this was the blueprint for the "voyage-to-doom" plot that's gripped readers (and writers!) in a million different guises in the century and a-half-plus that's passed since Poe penned the original.

The excellent art in the last story can't help it transcend its mundanity—one of the myriad of weird quickies produced as four-color fillers. Still, the strength of the two classic adapta tions and the glorious Fox cover make a worthwhile comic. In harking back to 19th-century roots, *Chilling Tales* made itself unique among the many horror/fantasy titles on the stands. ■



Chilling Tales #16's cover (Jun 1953) is a classic of lurid menace, but it's the Kipling and Poe adaptations inside make it one of the most distinguished horror/fantasy issues from the "pre-Code" era.



Big red mushrooms, trees that are huge hands, a gallows to go, and some demonic demons are all part of Fox's intricate and archetypal world of horror in Chilling Tales #15 (Apr 1953).

The Matt Fox cover on Chilling Tales #17 (Oct 1953) ends the run with a spectacular horde of unholy creatures, grouped behind an arch-fiend ready to lead them through their repulsive rituals. The stories inside include adaptations of Poe and Sir Walter Scott.

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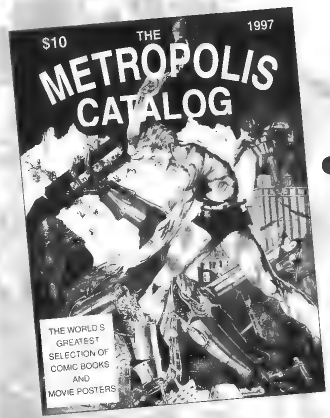

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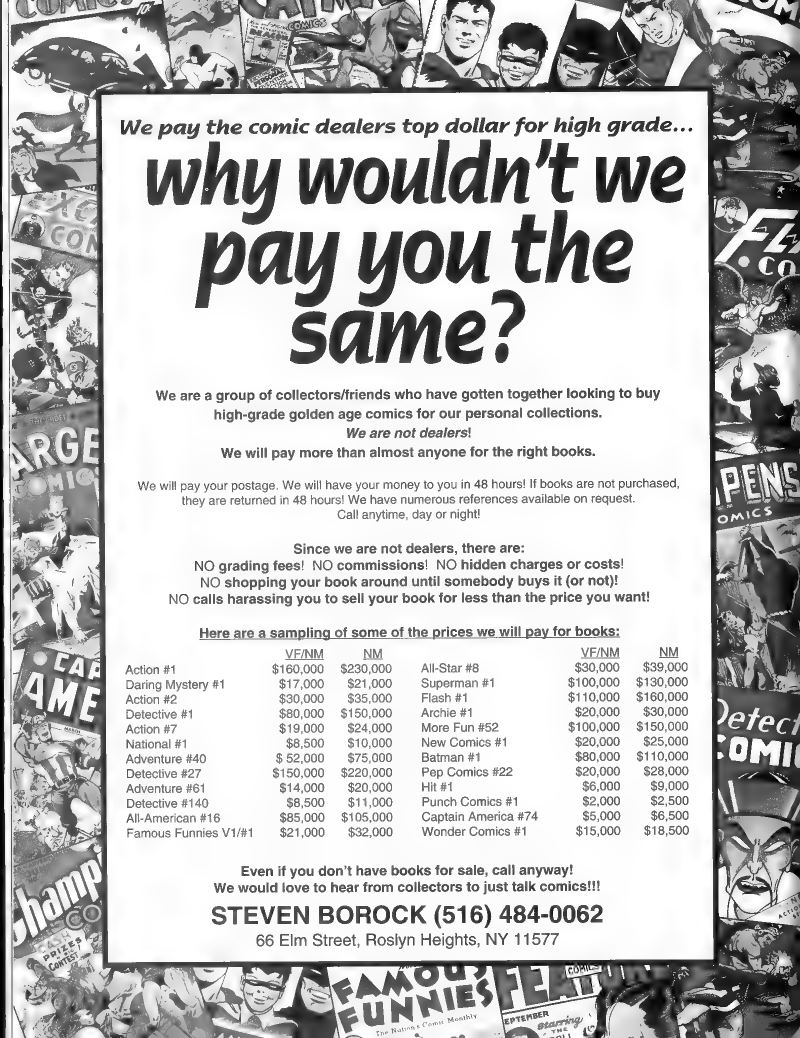

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Action #7	$19,000	$24,000	More Fun #52	$100,000	$150,000
National #1	$8,500	$10,000	New Comics #1	$20,000	$25,000
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Detective #140	$8,500	$11,000	Punch Comics #1	$2,000	$2,500
All-American #16	$85,000	$105,000	Captain America #74	$5,000	$6,500
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Hailing the Space Cabbie!

By Michelle Nolan

I'M LEADING THE WAY THROUGH SPACE FOR THOSE CROOKS' GETAWAY CAR! IF ONLY I COULD ALERT THE SPACE-POLICE WITHOUT THE CROOKS KNOWING IT!
SPACELANE NEPTUNE--6A
ASTEROID HIGHWAY 33
INTERPLANETARY POLICE STATION
BY: OTTO BINDER

Many of the most charming comic book stories of all time and space come from DC's science fiction titles of the 1950s. Who today, however, remembers how the inimitable Space Cabbie once drove the interstellar lanes with reckless (if not wreckless) abandon, or how Bert Brandon of Interplanetary Insurance Inc. tried to sell life insurance policies on a planet where the inhabitants were immortal?

When DC Comics published its handsome hard cover reprint volume *The Greatest 1950's Stories Ever Told* some seven years ago (can it really be that far back?), I thought the company missed out by not including more of the obscure and unique stories it once published so frequently. But then, it was a commercial venture, and science fiction tales of such a wacky nature may have seemed too dated even for that festival of nostalgia.

It's too bad, though, that these characters have largely been forgotten except by those who have a special appreciation for the genius of Julius Schwartz as reflected by two of the finest science fiction comic book titles of all time, *Mystery In Space* and *Strange Adventures*.

Schwartz edited a mind-boggling variety of science fiction in these two anthology titles, but he also threw in a few extra-special regular characters.

When *Strange Adventures* began in 1950 (with #1 in August/September) and *Mystery In Space* followed in 1951 (with #1 in April/May), science fiction stories in comics were nothing terribly unusual, although only Fiction House was still running *Planet Comics*, then a decade older than *Strange Adventures*, which had enjoyed a long run exclusively as a science fiction title.

Planet Comics, however, was a character anthology, whereas Schwartz edited *Strange Adventures* and *Mystery In Space* in the rich pulp tradition of the company from which he came to DC during World War II–Ned Pines' Better Publications (often referred to as Standard Magazines). This publisher produced *Startling Stories* and *Thrilling Wonder Stories* among its legion of long-running pulp titles.

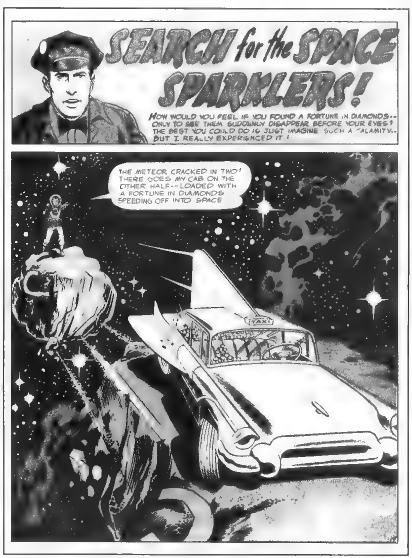
That means Schwartz oversaw an appealing mix of regular characters and general fiction for his DC titles, much of it written by well-known science writers and beautifully rendered by several of DC's most talented artists.

The first regular characters in the two new science fiction comics were straight out of the grand tradition of pulp space opera... Chris KL-99 in *Strange Adventures* and Knights of the Galaxy in *Mystery In Space*. The marvelous science fiction artist Murphy Anderson's Chris KL-99, the Columbus of Space, appeared in *Strange Adventures* #1-3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 15. Knights of the Galaxy ran in *Mystery In Space* #1-8.

Chris KL-99, written by Edmond Hamilton, was something of a knockoff of Hamilton's own Captain Future series, which began in his own pulp from Standard late in 1939 and was on its last original legs in *Startling Stories* at the time Chris KL-99 was discovering new worlds in 1950-51. Lyle, Space Commando, the star of Knights of the Galaxy, was in the tradition of Flash Gordon. Both were pure space opera, well done and lots of fun but nothing unusual. Incidentally, a few of the early covers on the two DC science fiction titles also were in the Pines' pulp tradition of putting gratuitous pulchritude on the covers, but that didn't last long. I guess DC's editors felt gimmicks would outsell girls!

Interestingly, after both characters vanished, DC did not again try super science fiction heroics by a regular character in their anthology comics until midway through 1959, when Adam Strange began in *Mystery In Space* #53 and Space Ranger started in *Tales of the Unexpected* #40. Both had successful debuts in 1958 issues of *Showcase*, DC's first tryout title. (I should note that DC did continue to use space opera with Tommy Tomorrow in *Action Comics* and later *World's Finest Comics*.)

The Splash Page from Mystery In Space #31 (Apr/May 1956) shows the Space Cabbie in a typical dilemma! It was whimsical scenes such as this that made DC's science fiction comics so endearing.


SEARCH for the SPACE SPARKLERS!
HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU FOUND A FORTUNE IN DIAMONDS--ONLY TO SEE THEM SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR BEFORE YOUR EYES? THE BEST YOU COULD DO IS JUST IMAGINE SUCH A "CALAMITY"... BUT I REALLY EXPERIENCED IT!
THE METEOR CRACKED IN TWO! THERE GOES MY CAB! ON THE OTHER HALF--LOADED WITH A FORTUNE IN DIAMONDS! SPEEDING OFF INTO SPACE!
TAXI

Instead, Schwartz went with the first major mutant superhero, Captain Comet, who debuted in *Strange Adventures* #9 (June 1951) and ran through #49 in 1954 (though not appearing in #45, 47 and 48). Captain Comet, who was profiled as part of an article on science fiction in Nolan's Notebook in *CBM* #37, has been well-covered by several writers. In passing, though, I would like to mention that his gorgeous jet-black debut cover (*SA* #9) is one of the most striking in comic book history!

However, the only other two regular characters in either *Mystery In Space* or *Strange Adventures* in the mid-1950s (Space Cabbie and Interplanetary Insurance, both in *Mystery In Space*) have been largely ignored. I guarantee you, however, that if you read one of their little six-page epics, you'll be hooked! You'll marvel at how many plot twists Schwartz could edit into a six-page story.

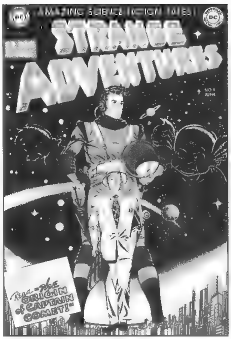
By the way, DC didn't usually go in for profound "message plots" the way EC often did during its all-too-brief period of publishing science fiction. Nor did DC use many unsympathetic protagonists, as EC and Atlas, among others, also often did. Rather, Schwartz and his cohorts stressed the use of clever plots, often obviously-done tongue–in-cheek elements may have gone over the heads of most children, but it makes the stories that much more charming to adult collectors today!

The use of tightly plotted, short stories is a lost art, more's the pity. It seems odd that in this day of supposedly diminishing attention spans, comic book stories are spread out as much as possible, whereas they were much more tightly spun three or four decades ago. However, it sometimes took genuine concentration to follow all the twists and turns of the likes of Space Cabbie in a DC science fiction story.

Interplanetary Insurance, drawn in typically whimsical style by Carmine Infantino, was the first "off-the-wall" science fiction feature, but it ran in only 10 issues of *Mystery In Space*, from #16 (October/November 1953) through #25 (April/May 1955). (Contrary to the *Overstreet Price Guide* listing, the series did appear in #19.) The bespectacled hero, Bert Brandon, looked something like the stereotypical version of the computer nerd today or the typical "Man in the Gray Flannel Suit" of the 1950s (with a few futuristic modifications).

Selling life insurance on other worlds and to alien cultures lent itself to all kinds of plot twists, once again in the tradition of several of the pulp "gimmick" science fiction series such as the Gerry Carlyle interplanetary big game hunting epics in *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, about the limitless adventures of a cocky heroine on an endless space safari.

The Bert Brandon Interplanetary Insurance stories where characterized by a series of spacegrams (one or two on every page) sent from Bert to his boss William J. Emory of "Interplanetary Insurance, Inc., Capitol City, Earth." The series had no logo, other than the title on the first story, which began with a partial splash page in typically witty style. A doctor



examining a member of the Lullie race on the newly-discovered planetoid Gllyn says, "My examination of the creatures on this planet shows they can never die -except by accident!" Responds Bert: "Wonderful! I've sold them all life insurance policies! That means Interplanetary Insurance will never have to pay off!"

What Bert didn't know was that the Lullies, like caterpillars and butterflies, have two life cycles--and that they would put in claims when their first bodies died! To quote Bert in a caption: "I rushed to the queen, who lent me an attentive antenna, but...." Eventually, however, with his company facing bankruptcy as the result of his mistake, Bert helps foil an invasion of the Lullies from their world's other race, thereby earning their gratitude and, much more important, no insurance claims for their first bodies!

I was hooked by the opening panels: "It's three months since you sold a life insurance policy, Brandon!" his shadowed boss says. "Produce--or you're through at I.I.I!" Responds Bert, "But, Mr. Emory the territory on all nine planets is taken!" How could anyone resist a series that begins like that?

It's beyond the scope of this column to review all ten Interplanetary Insurance stories (see list), but they are great fun, much as Infantino's Detective Chimp stories of the same era in *Rex The Wonder Dog*.

Perhaps the most amusing Bert Brandon epic was "The Living Camera!" in *Mystery In Space* #23 (December 1954 - January 1955). In this story, Bert teams up with a "Polaroid Bear" named Klik, who has a third eye that can produce photos. By the way, the story involves the need for a "retinal scan of a character's eyes... a then futuristic technique that is no longer science fiction!

Klik takes a picture of a suspicious fellow's eye through a keyhole, leading to the discovery of fraud. Amusingly, the story ends with Bert in jail, awaiting bail from his boss, after being charged with impersonating a speed officer, a fact confirmed by photos taken by Klik!

Mystery In Space #23 is also the issue with the unforgettable cover story, "Monkey Rocket to Mars," in which the first passengers to Mars (a crew of monkeys) unwittingly save the Martian civilization from a plague of locusts. It's absolutely hysterical, yet profound in a way only Schwartz and DC could be! If you were a child of the 1950s, the generally upbeat endings of DC's science fiction stories were a refreshing tonic to some of the international pessimism of the period.

The Bert Brandon stories were all entertaining, but my favorite DC science fiction character of all was the Space Cabbie series (also sometimes known as the Space Cabby). The Space Cabbie (apparently drawn by several different artists) was never named (or at least I don't recall ever seeing one) but he didn't need to be. He epitomized cabbies everywhere, hustling to make a living.

LEFT TO RIGHT:
Captain Comet's striking debut on the cover of Strange Adv. #9 (Jun 1951). MIS #5 (Dec 1951/Jan 1952) features Lyle, Space Commando, star of the Knights of the Galaxy. Space Cabbie's only cover appearance, MIS #24 (Feb/Mar 1955).

CBM CHECKLIST

INTERPLANETARY INSURANCE, INC. STORIES IN MYSTERY IN SPACE

#16 (Oct/Nov 1953) – "Interplanetary Insurance, Inc."
#17 (Dec 1953/Jan 1954) – "The Thought Pirate!"
#18 (Feb/Mar 1954) – "The Runaway World!"
#19 (Apr/May 1954) – "The Robot Detective of Mars!"
#20 (Jun/Jul 1954) – "Interplanetary Insomnia, Inc!"
#21 (Aug/Sep 1954) – "Rocket Race Jockey!"
#22 (Oct/Nov 1954) – "Rescue Through the Fourth Dimension!"
#23 (Dec 1954/Jan 1955) – "The Living Camera!"
#24 (Feb/Mar 1955) – "Duel in the Stars!"
#25 (Apr/May 1955) – "The Explosive Man!"

Contrary to some references, the first Space Cabbie story was in *Mystery in Space* #21 (August/September 1954), not in #24. Howard Sherman's art tells the tale of the "Space Taxi!" as the story is entitled, in which the cabbie outwits an alien criminal who cheats him out of a fare.

Apparently, the Space Cabbie character was not originally intended to be developed into a series, but he reappeared after six months in Sherman's story "The Hitchhiker of Space!" in *Mystery in Space* #24 (February/March 1955, the last pre-code issue). It was the only Space Cabbie story to be featured on a cover of *Mystery In Space*, but it was cover-featured as an ordinary science fiction story, not as part of a series. The hitchhiker of the title is the Space Cabbie himself, trying to get around in search of his stolen space-taxi, which had been located on Jupiter.

Interestingly, the character on the cover is portrayed as a middle-aged man hitching a ride on a meteor, not as the 30ish and muscular, raffish Space Cabbie, so these first two tales may have developed into a series more or less by "cosmic" accident. Interplanetary Insurance and Space Cabbie both appeared in *MIS* #21 and 24, the only times they ran in the same issue. Space Cabbie's regular series began with *Mystery In Space* #26 (June/July 1955) and continued in every issue through #47 (October 1958).

I've included a listing of all the Space Cabbie stories, so you can get the flavor of the series. I can definitely say which one is my favorite, since it appeared in the very first comic book I ever purchased as a child! Can you recall your very own first comic book, the first you were allowed to purchase for yourself? I sure can!

I can remember reading other kids' comics, especially Uncle Scrooge, Little Lulu and Superman of the mid-1950s, but never purchased any for myself because we were a relatively poor but highly literate family. It simply never occurred to my parents to bring home comic books, or to give me dimes for them. However, I'll never forget that weekend in April 1956, when my father was bringing our family home from a trip to the beach in Santa Cruz, California, about 30 miles "over the hill" from our then-beautiful Santa Clara Valley.

We stopped at the Buy-Wise Market in Santa Clara, a few blocks from our home, and Dad handed me a dime and made a suggestion that changed my life: "Why don't you pick out a comic book to take home?" Talk about being hooked! I looked at all the gleaming Dell, DC and Atlas comics on the spinner rack, and, after much agonizing, I selected *Mystery In Space* #32 (June/July 1956). Interestingly, I notice this issue seems less common on dealers' lists than others of that title from the same period. And it's nice to know I had the good taste to select a comic that *Overstreet* now lists at $275 in Near-Mint! (My original copy, however, has degenerated into a much-loved "Fair"!)

The Space Cabbie story in this issue, "The Pea-Pod Planet," intrigued me to the limit. It told the tale of how the Space Cabbie found his man on a planet of identical beings while outwitting a criminal, then ended with the following exchange in the space hack with the alien good guy: "One thing is bothering me about you Earth people, Cabby!" "I have a question to ask you too, Professor. But you first!"

"Well," the alien says, "you all look as alike to me as peas in a pod! How do you tell each other apart?" "That's the same question I was going to ask you!" Space Cabbie replies.

With stories like that, it wasn't long before I was back at the Buy-Wise spinner rack! Let's hear your stories of buying your first comic–and I'll bet you didn't need the Space Cabbie to get you to the store! ■

CBM CHECKLIST

SPACE CABBIE STORIES IN MYSTERY IN SPACE

#21 (Aug/Sep 1954) – "Space Taxi!
#24 (Feb/Mar 1955) – "Hitchhiker of Space!"
#26 (Jun/Jul 1955) – "Mystery of the Counterfeit Space Cabby!"
#27 (Aug/Sep 1955) – "Interplanetary Parcel of Peril!"
#28 (Oct/Nov 1955) – "Space Flight to Danger!"
#29 (Dec 1955/Jan 1956) – "The Robot Without a World!"
#30 (Feb/Mar 1956) – "The Robinson Crusoe of Space!"
#31 (Apr/May 1956) – Search for the Space Sparklers!"
#32 (Jun/Jul 1956) – The Pea-Pod Planet!"
#33 (Aug/Sep 1956) – "Interplanetary Safari!"
#34 (Oct/Nov 1956) – "Dangerous Journey to Earth!"
#35 (Dec 1956/Jan 1957) – "Secret of the Cabby's Medallion!"
#36 (Feb/Mar 1957) – "The Expanding Space Taxi!"
#37 (Apr/May 1957) – "One-Way Ride to Eternity!"
#38 (Jun/Jul 1957) – "Trail of the Glowing Embers!"
#39 (Aug/Sep 1957) – "Through the Time Barrier!"
#40 (Oct/Nov 1957) – "Interplanetary Speedway!"
#41 (Dec 1957/Jan 1958) – "The Anti-Gravity Man!"
#42 (Feb/Mar 1958) – "Follow the Space Leader!"
#43 (Apr/May 1958) – "Menace of the Space Nectar!"
#44 (Jun/Jul 1958) – "Riddle of the Glowing Space Cabby!"
#45 (Aug 1958) – "The Luxury Limousine of Space!"
#46 (Sep 1958) – "Search for a Star!"
#47 (Oct 1958) – "Riddle of the Rival Space Cabbies!"

Michelle Nolan is a nationally recognized collector and researcher of comic books from the '40s through the '60s. In real life, Michelle works as a freelance journalist.

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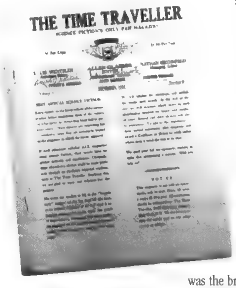
10) Page Lightening

Architect of the Silver Age! Chapter One: Fan Of Wonder

Some three years after Tarzan and four years before Zorro another legend of 20th-century popular literature was born. This one is a real person, one whose life as a science fiction agent and a comic book editor has been dedicated to expanding the possibilities and prestige of his chosen fields. Julius Schwartz was born in June 1915 in New York's Bronx, in close proximity to the heart of the USA's publishing industry. Schwartz was born again in 1928 when he saw his first issue of *Amazing Stories*, acquired on a trade from a friend to avert boredom on a rainy afternoon.

The magazine's "bedsheet" (8½" x 11") size compelled attention, and the cover illustration of a gigantic sea serpent threatening a raft full of people–by master artist Frank R. Paul–gave the boy his first heady taste of the "sense of wonder" that is the essence of science fiction. The issue was dated June 1926, the third issue of the first all-SF magazine. The Paul illustration was for the second installment of the Jules Verne classic, *A Journey to the Center of the Earth*. This was a reprint of the Frenchman's 1864 novel, but in a few years and with Julie's help, there were plenty of new writers filling up the pages of several SF magazines, as the genre gained in popularity.


THE TIME TRAVELLER

Amazing Stories was the brainchild of editor and publisher Hugo Gernsback, an emigre from Luxembourg who had carved a niche on the newsstands with magazines like *Electrical Experimenter* and *Science and Invention*. With the industrial revolution underway and World War I spawning mechanical marvels–however destructive their purpose–Gernsback's timing was right, moreover he also knew how to package a magazine, as Julie knew from staring at Paul's awesome cover art on that rainy day in 1928. Inside the mag, the exciting chapters of Verne were joined by a reprint of H.G. Wells' "The Star," along with a story by Murray Leinster, "The Runaway Skyscraper"–whose great opening line "The whole thing started when the clock on the Metropolitan tower began to run backwards."–taught Julie the value of a fast hook–a trick he would use excellently and extensively in his comic book career when a clever cover or opening story line became the hook. To say that Schwartz became an avid reader of *Amazing* would be grossly understated.

Julie's appreciation of what Gernsback dubbed "scientifiction" (STF)–made him practically memorize *Amazing*'s contents, doubling his efforts when Gernsback added *Wonder Stories* in 1929. And the fantasy mag, *Weird Tales* was required reading as well–just coming into its finest years, with Robert E. Howard working towards the Conan series and a host of other luminaries batting out fantastic fiction. Then with Clayton Publications start of *Astounding Stories* in January 1930–STF was on the move!

Mort Weisinger was involved in an STF club, the Scienceers, and when Julie joined it in June 1931–these two quickly became more than fans, they became fanatics! The newfound friend's began corresponding with STF authors–seeking biographical information and gossip which they published in their fanzine, *The Time Traveller*, debuting in January 1932. They received letters from authors like Edward E. Smith, whose "The Skylark of Space" was the first popular space opera, and David H. Keller, a doctor who wrote STF with human interests and psychological twists. *The Time Traveller* was the first fanzine and the first to achieve nation-wide circulation, and it soon became the focal point of what would become known as fandom–as readers got to know each other through the letters column. Indeed, it is being one of the organizers of science fiction fandom that Schwartz ranks as one of his crowning achievements.

And, of course, if Gernsback hadn't run full addresses in *Amazing*'s letter column, *The Time Traveller* wouldn't have had a mailing list. Many of the early fans later became pros, and others made meaningful contributions and connections that added to the era. The "Science Correspondence Club" included Otto Binder–future Captain Marvel and Superman scribe, Ray Palmer–

The many lives of Julius Schwartz

DC's Legendary Editor...

BY PAT S. CALHOUN
For Julius Schwartz

Joe Kubert's caricature tribute to Julius Schwartz and his super friends, originally the cover art of DC's house fanzine, the **Amazing World of DC Comics** #3 (Nov 1974).

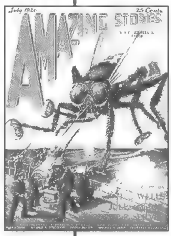
The Time Traveller #8 (Sept 1939, facing page) shows how Connie Ruppert's printing has endured.

CBM agent Shawn Hamilton visited with Julie–with the tape recorder running–at the Mid-Ohio Con, in November 1996. Here are some nuggets from the "agent of wonder's" meditations on his and our achievements in 20th-century popular literature, especially the sci-fi/fantasy field and that unsurpassable marvel of four-color printing, the comic book.

JULIE SCHWARTZ: March 5, 1926 is the most important day in science fiction history. That was the date that **Amazing Stories** first appeared on the newsstand. It was an all science fiction magazine, mostly reprints, because very little science fiction was being written then; there was no market for it. The only magazines that occasionally printed science fiction were **Weird Tales** (including many stories by Edmond Hamilton) and **Argosy Magazine**, which called them "Different Stories." Among those writing for Argosy were A. Merritt–possibly the best fantasy writer of the twenties and thirties, Ray Cummings, Murray Leinster, and Homer E. Flint.

Classic stories by H. G. Wells and Jules Verne were soon joined by new writers such as Edward E. Smith and David H

(Continued on page 30)

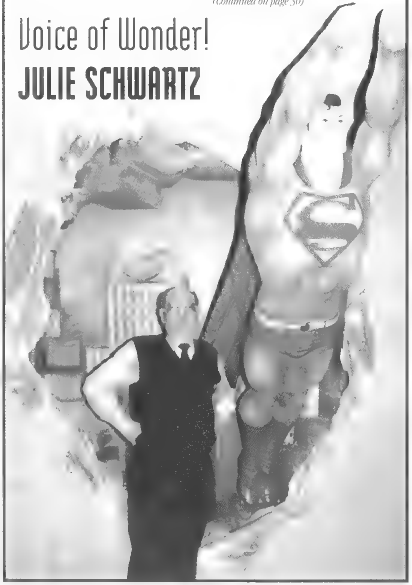


Gernsback's Amazing Stories, the first SF mag, often featured a Frank R. Paul cover (like #4, Jul 1926, below).

future editor of *Amazing Stories*, and Jerry Siegel–co-creator of Superman–who in corresponding with Walter Dennis–a reporter for a great Metropolitan newspaper (in Chicago)– tall, dark-haired and wearing a fedora and horn-rim glasses–found the inspiration for, the occupation and the "look" of the character, Clark Kent.

Within a year the crude mimeographed *Time Traveller* evolved into the typeset *Science Fiction Digest*. A major coup was the exciting "round robin" serial "Cosmos" which ran from July 1933 through October/November 1934 (in what was by then titled *Fantasy Magazine*) and featured chapters by A. Merritt, Otto Binder, E. E. "Doc" Smith, Ralph Milne Farley, David H. Keller, and John W. Campbell–with the conclusion delivered by the redoubtable Edmond Hamilton.

Voice of Wonder!
JULIE SCHWARTZ



Chapter Two: Agent Of Wonder

Mort and Julie began to invade the editorial offices of *Amazing* in Manhattan, eager to obtain from editor T. O'Conner Sloane (a scientist and magazine veteran who insisted space travel was impossible) information about what was scheduled in forthcoming issues. Sloane had been managing editor under Gernsback. It was after Julie reported an act of plagarism that he had uncovered, by a fellow Scienceer (who they'd envied for having sold a yarn to *Amazing*), that Sloane started to appreciate Julie–rewarding his visits with advance copies of the next issue and regaling him with STF chat that mostly involved disavowal of the "poppycock" he published. Weisinger and Schwartz also made the acquaintance of F. Orlin Tremaine, editor of *Astounding*. It was after one of these visits that Mort and Julie realized that the editors kept telling them about the kind of stories they preferred–and what a good position they were in to pass this information on to their author correspondents. In this manner, the two teenagers conceived the Solar Sales Service, becoming the first literary agents specializing in science fiction.

Writing to every SF author they were in contact with, they made a pitch about having "made an extensive survey of the science fiction field, through a series of talks with the various

editors" and were convinced not only that SF was booming but that they knew the needs of the various mags and could thence help sell the stories that met these needs.

They charged a dollar reading fee along with a 10% commission per sale. And what a thrill when a story by Edmond Hamilton arrived in the mail with a dollar bill folded inside it. It was a 7000-word yarn titled "Master of the Genes." Just imagine--they would be the first to read stories by their favorite authors--and get paid for it! The years of collecting (and paying for) SF were starting to yield a harvest. They sent Hamilton his dollar back along with the news that *Wonder Stories* would buy the story for $35--which netted Julie and Mort $1.75 each.

Soon their client list included Hamilton, Keller, Manly Wade Wellman, John Russell Fearn, Henry Kuttner, Stanley G. Weinbaum, Robert Bloch, Otto Binder, Alfred Bester, Eric Frank Russell, Leigh Brackett, and the reclusive master fantasist of Rhode Island . . H. P. Lovecraft! When Julie met Lovecraft, at a literary gathering in 1935, he asked him if he had any stories that he hadn't been able to sell. Lovecraft said a mournful "Yes," and that the unsold tale was his longest--a 35,000 worder--"At the Mountains of Madness." When he offered it to Julie and Julie then agented it to *Astounding* for $350--it was a big day for both the veteran author and the young "demon" agent.

Four years later, Julie was "discovered" by a would-be writer who would go on to mainstream as well as SF fame . . a Los Angeles teenager named Ray Bradbury. Ray bussed across the country to meet Julie at the first World Science Fiction Convention in 1939 and persuaded him to become his literary agent. That year Frank R. Paul was Guest of Honor, the same artist whose cover had hooked Julie back in 1928. Two years later, in 1941, Julie (with Ed Hamilton) drove to California, and delivered Ray the check for the sale of his first professional story, "The Pendulum," to *Super Science Stories*.

AS BRADBURY TELLS IT:

". . . .Fourth of July evening in 1939 at the New York World's Fair, and fireworks in the sky and the threat of war in Europe, everything beginning and everything threatening to end, but being there at the Fair with Julie and Ross Rocklynne and Charlie Hornig, feeling myself among friends who would pet me and bulwark me and encourage me so I could make it through those terrible years ahead somehow...

"My second memory was...the summer of 1941. Julie drove to the coast that year with Edmond Hamilton and by a fine coincidence moved into a bungalow court two blocks away from where I sold newspapers on a street corner each afternoon. It was the greatest summer in history because with his arrival, Julie brought the news, the superb surprise, that he had sold my story "The Pendulum" to *Super Science Stories*. It was published on my 21st birthday, (August 22nd) that year. I ran to Julie's bungalow with the copy of the magazine and we sat around, Julie and Ed drinking beer and myself downing five or six cokes, jubilant."

Edmond Hamilton's imagination circumnavigated time and space. His "Interstellar Patrol" stories (begun in the late 1920s) were seminal space opera, and in the 1930s his stories matured into profound explorations of the "sense of wonder."

Edmond Hamilton, author of illustrious SF novels like *City at World's End* and *The Star of Life*, as well as a host of short stories that defined the term "sense of wonder," told a marvelous anecdote about the agentry of one Julius Schwartz:

"Julie was my agent. . . and I was laboring hard on Captain Future novels... In the afternoons, while I was beating the typewriter, Jules would doze on a couch. He said that every time he heard my typewriter ping, he realized that I had written ten words more. And I was getting a cent a word, less Julie's 10% as agent, so Schwartz would shout 'Another penny!'"

Of course Julie did some good social work too; he introduced Hamilton to Leigh Brackett on one of those West Coast jaunts--which led to the marriage of two terrific SF writers--with Ray Bradbury as best man!

Back in New York, Julie had begun hosting a Thursday lunch at Steuben's Tavern on Forty-Seventh Street between Sixth and Broadway, where a corned beef on rye sandwich, fries, and beer ran to about fifty cents. Many of Julie's clients as well as Frank Belknap Long, Horace Gold, Otis Adelbert Kline,

In the 1940s, Hamilton wrote the pulp space hero Captain Future, and in the 1950s penned classic novels like "City at World's End" and "The Star of Life" as well as writing many comic scripts for DC (including work for Strange Adventures with Julie and Superman with Mort.

(Continued on page 31)

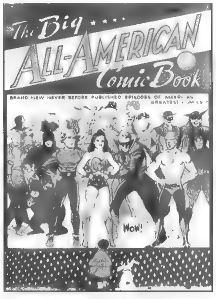
Keller. Gernsback made an important contribution to the future by running a letter column with complete addresses, to encourage readers to get in touch with one another, form clubs, and talk over science fiction. He even ran a cash contest, about how to popularize science fiction.

◀ A gathering of the young turks of the science fiction world in July, 1935. (Left to right) Conrad H Ruppert, Julie Schwartz, Otto Binder, Charles D. Hornig, Jack Darrow, Mort Weisinger

One day I'm reading **Amazing** or **Science Wonder Stories** and there's a letter from Mortimer Weisinger telling about a club in the Bronx, where I was brought up and lived, called the Scienceers, inviting fellow fans to attend. I didn't have a nickel to take a bus or a streetcar; so I walked. When I got there, a number of fellows came streaming out, grumbling about something. I went into the basement, and the only one there was Mort Weisinger. I told him I was here to join the Scienceers, what happened? Mort explained that he was the Treasurer and reported that there was no money in the Treasury because he had spent the money on comic books or movies or whatever it was. Now that turned out to be an extremely lucky break.

Because Mort and I were alone, we talked and kept on talking for hours about our mutual love of SF. We'd meet from time to time and talked about what was going on in science fiction. We'd discuss the stories we read, and while discussing them, we had the same problem. For example, we especially liked the stories written by Dr. David H Keller, the most popular science fiction writer of the time. We wondered who is this Dr. Keller? Where does he live? What kind of a doctor is he? What about Edward E. Smith–Doc Smith–who wrote the Skylark stories? And there were a number of other favorite writers, but we knew nothing about them. So Mort and I went back and forth: "It would be great if we could put out a 'Who's Who' telling fellow fans who these writers are, what they were working on, what new stories were coming out." To get in touch with the writers we wrote to the SF magazines, and asked the mail to be forwarded. The first letter we got back was from Edward E. Smith. And we were fascinated by what he had to say about himself.

Now we'd gathered all this information but didn't know what to do with it; so I suggested we put out a fan magazine. Mort and I were sixteen-plus years old and didn't feel professional enough to put out the magazine on our own, so we asked the Scienceers to get back together again to cooperate. Our first effort was called **The Time Traveller**, a mimeographed magazine which later evolved into **Science Fiction Digest** and **Fantasy Magazine**.



▲ The **Big All-American Comic Book** (1944) is a giant collection of new stories featuring most of the **All-American** anthology characters. It sold so well at the newsstand that all who worked on it, including Julie, received a $250 bonus

Weren't Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster in the picture at this time?

Among **TTT**'s first subscribers was Jerry Siegel from Cleveland. He said he liked the magazine so much, he was going to put one out, too. While we were giving out news and gossip, he wanted to feature stories in a 'zine called **Science Fiction**. He didn't have any money to print it, so he got permission to use the mimeograph from his high school. Jerry Siegel's main ambition from the beginning was to become a science fiction writer and sell to the pulp magazines. There was no thought of comics… there were no comics. He wanted to be as good a writer as his idol, Edgar Rice Burroughs. He wrote story after story but they were all ere rejected.

So he ran his stories in his 'zine **Science Fiction**. The January 1933 issue featured "The Reign of the Superman," illustrated by Joe Shuster. In the Reader's Department the first letter complimented him on the magazine. That letter was written by me! After five issues, the magazine ended, but the idea of the Superman character never escaped him. Accounts have been written that suggest Siegel "awoke one night and wrote down the idea of the Superman character" and blah, blah, blah. So my whole point is–Mort and I put out the magazine, which prompted Siegel to put out his own magazine, which led to him creating the Superman character! That's my "Big Bang Theory" about the creation of Superman.

What inspired you to become a sci-fi agent?

Back in the days of pulp magazines, a writer would submit a story to a magazine, where it would sit on an editor's desk for two weeks if not *(continued on page 32)*

Jack Williamson, L. Sprague DeCamp, and Robert A. Heinlein ate, quaffed, and talked at these meetings. Mort (who had won the job as editor of *Wonder* (which became *Thrilling Wonder Stories*) had received an entry in his "best new author" contest called "The Broken Axiom" by an unknown, Alfred Bester. Mort asked Julie to "handle this comer, and introduce him to the gang at Steuben's."

Bester was modest about his talent, and Julie gave his ego a big boost by selling a novelette, "The Dead Only Die Once," to *Unknown*, edited by John W. Campbell, who'd made it and *Astounding* something of a prestige market. Campbell changed the title to "Hell Is Forever," and ran it in the August 1942 *Unknown*. Decades later Bester told Julie that it "...was an electrifying experience. It was the single most big, big step up in my confidence. If I could make it with *Unknown*, then maybe I'm a writer after all. The only way you know you're good is the pat on the back when other people approve of what you've done."

Bester's confidence was up, but he soon realized that the SF field was too small to support him. By then Mort had left Standard Magazines to work as editor for DC Comics and convinced Alfie to moonlight by writing comics for DC. Bester's first strip was Genius Jones, a humor filler, but he soon moved on to *All-American Comics*' Green Lantern. His work there included writing the Lantern's famous oath and the creation of two excellent villains: Solomon Grundy–a zombie-like giant who rose up out of a grave in the swamp, and Vandal Savage–a Cro-Magnon who'd been struck by lightning and rendered immortal, growing stronger, more knowledgeable, and more evil as the centuries went on.

Alfred Bester is the author of much classic SF, including two legendary novels from the 1950s: The Demolished Man and The Stars My Destination.

Paul Reinman produced a spooky cover for All-American Comics #61 (Oct 1944) to showcase the introduction of Solomon Grundy, the wonderful swamp zombie created by Alfred Bester.

Chapter Three: Editor Of Wonder

When Bester heard about an editorial opening at All-American (a branch of DC) he passed the word on to Julie, who–despite protesting that he knew practically nothing about comics–went to be interviewed by Sheldon Mayer on February 21, 1944. Mayer was an artistic genius–his Scribbly is the ultimate autobiographical fantasy of a young cartoonist–who felt "trapped" by his role of editor but as one, helped make DC the superhero powerhouse that it became. Schwartz won the job, Mayer has said, because he seemed like he could nurture creative people and help them create. Julie's thanks to Bester include not only that he stayed there for 40 plus years but also it was at DC that he met the beautiful woman (Jean, the front-office secretary) who became his wife.

Alfred Bester went on to write two science fiction novels that still serve as the high watermarks of modern SF, *The Demolished Man* and *The Stars My Destination*. After batting out (as Bester used to say) these and outstanding shorter SF in the early 1950s he got a job as editor for *Holiday* magazine– traveling the world interviewing celebrities and (as JS nicely put it) "telling the world in his working hours what to do with their spare time."

Although Julie quit agenting after starting as a comic book editor at DC, his previous connections served him in good stead. After Bester left *Green Lantern*, Schwartz offered his former client Henry Kuttner the job. Kuttner at first passed on it but gave in at the urging of his wife; she had become enamored of the Lantern's humorous sidekick, a Brooklyn cabbie named Doiby Dickles who drove a hack named "Goitrude" and liked to massage crooks' noggins with a pipe wrench. Kuttner's wife, C. L. (Catherine) Moore was also an outstanding fantasy writer, having authored the colorful adventures of Northwest Smith (including the classic "Shambleu"–where Northwest meets up with Medusa on Mars) and the engaging female barbarian, Jirel of Joiry. Around this time husband and wife began overtly collaborating–under the byline of Lewis Padgett, mostly appearing in Campbell's *Astounding*.

Julie was coming into the comics biz at a time of growth and change. After the War ended, the superheroes–who'd been the dominant factor in the industry's dynamic success story–were losing ground to a variety of genres–chiefly crime, romance, western, and animation. In a move that befell many superhero

(Continued on page 34.)

months. If it was rejected, it would go back to the writer, who would send it to another magazine–the few that existed. So Mort and I got the idea of becoming literary agents and tipping off writers about which editors were interested in work. Thus was formed the "Solar Sales Service" agency.

But Mort also wanted to become a writer. Standard Magazines–a group of pulp magazines–ran a contest for new writers and Mort submitted a story which Jack Schiff–one of the editors–liked and bought. He soon hired Mort to become an editor. So editor Mort told me, "Obviously I can't buy stories from myself, so you handle Solar by yourself."

▲ Jack Schiff was an editor for Standard's pulps in the 1930s when Mort Weisinger started work there. Jack followed Mort to DC in 1941 where he soon went from Batman scripter to editor. Jack's career at DC extended through the Golden Age and into the Silver Age, where he edited titles like **Tales of the Unexpected** (featuring Space Ranger) as well as **Batman** and **Detective**.

▶ DC's second SF title, **Mystery In Space**, was launched in early 1951 and eventually became the home of Julie's popular Adam Strange series during the Silver Age. Shown here is the Mile High copy of **Mystery In Space** #4 (Oct/Nov 1951).

▶ The blurb box in the lower left corner of the cover of **Strange Adventures** #2 (Oct/Nov 1950) lists the names of contributors known to the science fiction world in an attempt to lure a crossover audience of SF readers. Note the awsome cover art by Jim Mooney, a regular contributor to **Strange Adventures**.

How did you finally get into the comics?

Mort eventually left Standard to work for the company that published and owned Superman–DC. One of my Solar clients, Alfred Bester, needed more writing assignments, so Mort suggested he write comics. Since Bester had no knowledge of comics, Mort said, "I'll introduce you to someone who'll teach you all you have to know." The fellow he introduced him to was Bill Finger, who grew up on the pulps. (I hope everyone knows by now that Bill was the co-creator of Batman, co-creator of Green Lantern, and a sensational comic book writer.) Anyway, thanks to Bill, Alfie took over scripting Green Lantern. One day he told me that an editorial spot was open at All-American Comics and insisted that I apply. On the subway ride going there, I read my first three comics. Later that day, I was interviewed by Shelly Mayer, and won the job.

Who did you particularly admire at All-American and DC?

Well, the most prolific writer was Gardner Fox. Gardner would come into the office at 9 or 9:30 with a plot. Sometimes I liked it, sometimes I'd re-plot it, sometimes I'd reject it altogether. By the time he left, Gardner would have a deadline to submit a story-a deadline, by the way, that he never missed!

I used to regularly pull a gag on Gardner… especially later, when I took over Batman in the mid '60s. Remembering that Batman was a master escape artist, like a Houdini, I would think up elaborate traps for him. So from time to time, we'd have a terrific trap, and we couldn't figure out how Batman would ever get out of it. I'd say, "Well, let's break for lunch–get our minds off it.' Then, miraculously, we'd come up with the answer by the time we'd got back from lunch. The point was, I already knew the answer, but by breaking for lunch, I knew Gardner would pick up the check! (*chuckle*)

Who else?

I thought a lot of Sheldon Mayer. Shelly Mayer was a triple threat man. Excellent editor, excellent story writer, and an excellent artist. That Scribbly of his was a priceless character. It was inspired by himself, no question about it.

In my opinion, Shelly is the guy who really discovered Superman. Siegel and Shuster tried year after year to get a syndicate to buy their Superman strip. As a last hope, they sent it to **All-American Comics**, and Shelly was the one who looked through all the material. He liked it and brought it into M. C. Gaines. Now Gaines knew that Harry

▼ In 1953 science fiction fans began issuing annual awards for the best novel, short story, artist, and other categories. They dubbed the award Hugo, after Hugo Gernsback–who launched the first SF magazine, **Amazing Stories**. Gernsback heard about the award and wanted to see one, so it was arranged for fan supreme Forrest J. Ackerman to pay a visit to Hugo and show him a Hugo. In this shot, the "Ackermonster" (in the dark suit) seems genuinely thrilled to meet the man who started it all back in 1926.

Donenfeld of DC Comics was starting a new magazine, and was looking around for a lead feature, and maybe would be interested in this Superman hero. Eventually, Superman appeared in and on the cover of **Action** #1 in June 1938, and the rest is history.

Also, it was Shelly, to my knowledge, who came up with the idea of **All Star Comics**. Originally, there'd be a story for each of the lead characters from DC's monthly anthologies–"all stars' of that era. Then Shelly came up with the wonderful idea of putting them together in one story, and that's how the Justice Society of America began in **All Star** #3.

Did you work on Wonder Woman?

No! That was Shelly Mayer's baby.

Were you involved with the production of any of the other All American titles?

Comic Cavalcade, which featured our main characters like **World's Finest** featured DC's. We also put out a 132-page one-shot called The **Big All-American Comic Book** featuring most of our characters. I wrote the Johnny Thunder story for that issue–one of the three stories I wrote in my life–and received a $250 bonus for it *(continued on page 35)*

A Testimonial for Schwartz?

BY HARLAN ELLISON

Harlan Ellison is the most-honored living writer of imaginative fiction and his work is included in the current annual edition of The Best American Short Stories.

Schwartz? You want a testimonial for Schwartz? Is that what you're asking for? A testimonial tonight? Something that reinforces this "living legend" business, am I right, am I getting this right? Something that exalts, something that lauds, some wonderful words that extoll, that eulogize, praise, flatter, enhance and ennoble. Have I got it correctly, what it is you want? Well, let me just tell you.

Schwartz: When they excavated the buried ruins of the ancient Sumerian city of Uruk in 1912, there on that lower Mesopotamian plain where, 3,500 years before the birth of Christ, were written the earliest words of mankind, the great Gilgamesh legend; there, there in the great Limestone Temple were unearthed the shards of an alabaster cult vase, pictographically engraved with the heroic story of Schwartz the Slayer. We're talking about Schwartz here! Tribute, testimonial? I'll give you testimonial!

Schwartz: In 1976, when they discovered the terracotta army of China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi, there in Shanxi province, east-central China, the most startling aspect of the unearthing of those thousands of sculpted warriors, was that eleven out of thirteen statues bore the unmistakable countenance of He Who Must Kvetch, the great Schwartz! We're talking the Schwartzmeister, can you hear me? Word!

Schwartz: When they finally found the mummified and shattered corpse of the Titanic, at a terrible depth below the North Atlantic, and they circumnavigated it for the first time with the mini-sub, they found–amazingly, astoundingly–the golden figure of Schwartz the Great Navigator still standing at the ceremonial helm, where it had been placed by the owners of the White Star line prior to the great ocean queen's maiden voyage. Unsullied by anemone or acid wash, there stood the heroic Schwartz simulacrum, untarnished by time, noble even at the deepest dark of the cruel downbelow.

You ask me about Schwartz? You want mere words to encompass the grandeur, the heroism, the incomparable singularity of wonder we are blessed to have with us? The immortal Schwartz, you want I should sum him up in one measly testimonial? Rhani better to ask how bright shine the stars, how mournful cries the wind, how deep is the ocean, how high the sky!

He is... Schwartz! Let the name ring down the halls of Forever. I say... SHUH-WARTZ! Ask no more of me.

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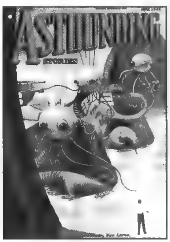
(Continued from page 31)

titles, Julie took *All-American Comics*, the long-time home of Green Lantern, and converted it, in 1948, into *All-American Western* with the 103rd issue. (Flash ceased publication in 1949, *Sensation* became a weird mystery title, *All-Star*–home of the Justice Society–took the sagebrush trail in 1951, and *Star Spangled* became a war title in 1952.)



The June 1936 issue of Astounding Stories features H. P. Lovecraft's "The Shadow Out of Time," with an imaginative cover by Howard Brown.

The Gernsback title, Science Wonder Stories was bought by Standard Magazines in the mid-1930s; they changed the name to Thrilling Wonder Stories and hired Mort Weisinger as editor.

By 1948, Shelly Mayer was itching to get back to actual cartooning, and when he stepped down as editor, Julie's responsibilities broadened to include art supervision as well as story editing. Mayer revived Scribbly for a series of delightful nostalgia that proved that the character was still the best "portrait of the artist as a young man" that comics has to offer.

With Schwartz around, it comes as no surprise that DC got off to a strong start when science fiction comics started appearing in 1950 (led by EC's *Weird Science* and *Weird Fantasy*); Julie struck paydirt with their premiere entry–*Strange Adventures* #1 (August/September 1950). The first five issues prominently featured the name of Edmond Hamilton on the covers–writing the interplanetary adventures of Kris-Kl.99 along with other yarns, with Gardner Fox making contributions, as well as an another SF writer and pal of Julie's, David V. Reed. *SA* #2's cover boasts the noteworthy names of H. L Gold–just before he got started as editor of *Galaxy Magazine* and published outstanding SF like Bester's novels and Isaac Asimov's robot novels, along with Virgil Finlay–the superlative fantasy artist whose detailed mastery of pen and ink illustration was a frequent highlight in *Weird Tales* and other mags.

Most of Finlay's comic features were two-page shorts, that even so managed to give a glimpse of his talent–with panoramic panels of future cities elegant in some impossible tomorrow. After Schwartz added a second (also successful) SF title, *Mystery In Space*, in early 1951, Finlay came to Julie needing some work. And Julie had a script handy, a six-page story, "The Mad Planet," that ran in *Mystery In Space* #19 in 1954. It's a rich concoction, with superb space scenes and first-rate robots and flying saucers, that marks a triumphant coming together of Julie's SF and comics worlds and makes one wish Finlay had had a chance to draw more fantasy comics.

The late Gardner Fox–who was co-creator of the Flash and the Justice Society and would of course go on during the Silver Age to script the Justice League and other DC superhero revivals–recalled working with editor Julie:

"I remember with nostalgia those old plot sessions of ours. From nine until twelve noon we wrestled with plot intricacies, character delineation, and other story matter until everything was fixed firmly in my mind.

"I can still hear him shout, 'Let's go, let's go!' when he was ready to go to work. Those were happy days, believe me."

By this time superheroes claimed only a fraction of comic titles. *Superman*, *Batman*, and *Wonder Woman* survived at DC, along with a couple of top "second bananas" like *Aquaman* and *Green Arrow*. And in 1953 and 1954 the anti-comics movement mushroomed, resulting in a Senate Investigation and an ultimatum to "clean up your act." Although this was aimed at the more lurid crime and horror books (EC and such) and the following "Comics Code" strictures hardly affected DC's editorial policy, the resulting shakedown–the loss of many publishers and a vast and rapid shrinkage of the market, including the overwhelming majority of adult readers, had the whole industry in a depression, and even DC was unsure of what kind of titles would work best on the brave new world of the post-Code newsstands. ■

Coming next issue! Julie Schwartz' "Revival of Wonder... Forging The Silver Age!"

A caricature (at right) of Julie done by Sheldon Mayer (above), remembering 1944... the first year they worked together.

SCHWARTZ INTERVIEW

Continued from page 33

because the issue sold so well. I was making $60 to $70 a week then–this is 1944. During the war years you could not give raises, but Shelly liked my work so much that in lieu of a raise, he gave me a bonus. I got an extra $100 a month.

I also plotted and edited **Flash Comics**, an anthology title featuring Flash and Hawkman along with other characters… plus miscellaneous filler pages. Flash, Green Lantern, and Wonder Woman eventually became so popular that they got their own magazines… like Superman and Batman.

Although you're famous for helping in the post-War transition… as All-American and All Star became western titles, Sensation became a mystery title, and Star

▲ Snapped in Chicago in 1938… (left to right) Ray Palmer, Otto Binder, Julius Schwartz.

Spangled a war title… most comic fans and historians know you for your editorial work on DC's great science fiction comics. When did you become Editor of Strange Adventures?

At first, Jack Schiff and I co-edited the early issues of **Strange Adventures**. He bought some stories on his own, and I bought some on my own. Eventually I became sole editor.

Because **Strange Adventures** was selling well, I was given the go-ahead to start a second SF title–**Mystery In Space**. I remember a young fella came looking for work, and I happened to have a script handy called "Spores from Space." He had been doing filler pages for me, so I asked, "Can you draw science fiction?" He said, "I can do anything," so I gave him the script. That story appeared in **Mystery In Space** #1, and the young artist was Frank Frazetta. Regrettably, it was the only science fiction story he ever did for me.

How did you get the great illustrator Virgil Finlay to draw a Mystery In Space story for you?

Actually, he asked me for the assignment. I was the agent for Henry Kuttner–a good friend. He was mainly writing weird fiction… and a "disciple" of H. P. Lovecraft. He wrote stories for **Weird Tales**–many of which I sold. I advised him that he couldn't make a living just writing weird tales, so how about writing science fiction? He had read SF, but had never written any. I said, besides, I'll probably sell it to Mort. So he wrote a story that I think was called "When the Earth Lived" which Mort did indeed buy. That's how Kuttner got into writing science fiction.

Anyway, Virgil Finlay was a very good friend of Henry Kuttner and occasionally when I got together with Hank (Henry), Finlay would be there. Finlay was not doing well financially and, in fact, would even occasionally do art for the walls of a local restaurant in exchange for meals.

Finlay had already done a few filler pages that appeared in **Real Fact Comics**. Then one day Finlay came up to my office and pleaded for an assignment. I explained that it wouldn't be worth his while, because I knew his style was very detailed… he put in every little dot very meticulously. But he insisted that he needed the work, so I gave him a script to illustrate. Finlay brought back the story in due time and it was quite good. I don't know if it was his greatest, but it sort of financially saved his life for a while.

I know many CBM readers regard those two books… Mystery In Space #1 with Frazetta's "Spores From Space" and Mystery In Space #19 with the Finlay-illustrated "The Mad Planet" as the highlights of the early run.

Well, that takes us up to just before the start of the Silver Age. Pat Calhoun will be quizzing you about the revivals of Flash and Green Lantern and the other wonders you concocted for that era, and our readers will get to feast on it next month when CBM #51 features Julie Schwartz Part II… "The Silver Schwartz!"

Sounds good… I'll look forward to it! ■

▲ Virgil Finlay was one of SF's finest artists, with a style of consummate intricacy… full of minute crosshatchings and carefully-rendered dot patterns. His imagination was wildly exotic; he worked excellently and prolifically in the fantasy and horror genres all through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

▲ Walter Dennis, Chicago newspaper reporter, was an SF fan who corresponded with Jerry Siegel, sending him this photo in 1930. Later, Walter served as the physical and career model for Clark Kent.

❀ ❀ ❀

ORIGINAL 1930's DISNEY POSTERS

Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Silly Symphonies, Snow White, etc.

❀ ❀ ❀

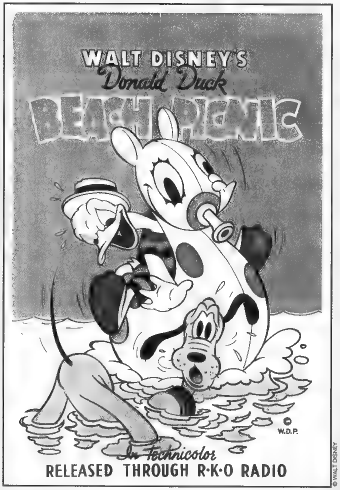
ORIGINAL 1930's ANIMATION ART

Walt Disney, Warner Brothers, Fleischer, etc (Cels, Backgrounds, Courvoisier Setups, etc.)

❀ ❀ ❀

ORIGINAL ARTWORK OF 1930's MODEL SHEETS AND 1930's POSTERS

❀ ❀ ❀



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ORIGINAL 1930's STRIP ART

(Dailies & Sundays) Disney, Herriman, McCay, Segar, etc.

❀ ❀ ❀

ORIGINAL 1930's CARTOON POSTERS

Popeye, Betty Boop, Felix the Cat, Krazy Kat, Oswald the Rabbit, and 1920's Alice's Wonderland

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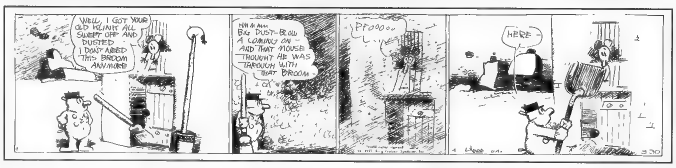
WELL, I GOT YOUR OLD HEINIE ALL SWEPT OFF AND DUSTED!
I DIDN'T NEED THE BROOM ANYHOW!
NOW AND BAG DUST-BLOW A LOAD-ON — AND THAT MOUSE THOUGHT HE WAS THROUGH WITH THAT BROOM!
PFOOO
HERE!

My Dinner with Julie

In every life, there is a turning point, a magical moment you will cherish forever. A time when everything changes. For Caesar, it was crossing the Rubicon and returning triumphantly to Rome. For Galileo, it was positioning the lenses just the right distance apart and viewing the moons of Jupiter. For Dan Quayle, it was discovering that the people of Latin America don't speak Latin.

BY WILLIAM BERNHARDT

For me, it was dinner with Julie.

Even today, long after the fact, it is a shimmering diamond in the dark folds of memory. On quiet winter evenings, when I'm relaxing by a crackling fire, a snifter of brandy in one hand, a warm cigar in the other, I snuggle into cozy leather slippers, prop my feet up, and remember...

It was a con like all cons, with nothing immediately evident to distinguish it from the hundreds of other comic conventions scheduled each year. There was a large dealers' room, apparently so called because only the dealers seemed to be making any deals ("I don't know why they allow all those little kids in here!"). There was a long schedule of "events," obviously chosen with an eye toward bulk rather than quality. There were numerous "special guests" who never showed up when they were supposed to and acted surly and put upon when they did.

And there was an awards banquet. For an additional $35, you could hobnob with the superstars of comicdom at the banquet during which awards would be announced and distributed.

I bought two tickets, one for my wife and one for myself.

"Okay," the heavy-set man at the registration booth said, "which superstar of comicdom do you want to sit with?"

"Well," I said hesitantly, "I don't know. Who have you got?"

The man scanned a chart that listed the seating arrangements. "I've got two seats open next to Arnie Congdon."

"Arnie Congdon?" I said. "Who's that?"

The man stared at me as if I were some sort of bug. "He's the letterer on Event Comics' new book, Bare-Bottomed Babes." His tone of voice added: "of course."

"Hmmm," I said. "That's tempting. But what else have you got?"

"Well," the man said, visibly annoyed, "I can just get you in at a table with Frank Fiebersham."

"Frank Fiebersham," I repeated thoughtfully. I decided to guess. "Does he work with Arnie Congdon?"

The man's eyes practically rolled out of his head. "Fiebersham is the author behind the new Green Acres TV-movie adaptation. That book is going to be hot!"

"Ummm," I said, trying not to sound ungrateful. "Are you sure you don't have anything else?"

"I'm afraid that's it," he said. Then, after a moment, he snapped his fingers. "Wait a minute. What about those old guys?"

My Dinner with Julie

The man rifled through some papers. "Yeah, you know–the guy with the girl's name." He yanked a piece of paper out from the bottom of the stack. "Yeah, that's him. Julie Schwartz."

My heart skipped a beat. The Julie Schwartz? The science fiction pioneer? Ray Bradbury's first agent? The father of the Silver Age? The instigator of the DC multiuniverse? The man who eliminated kryptonite (for a while)? The man who put the yellow oval on Batman's chest?

That was the table for me.

That night, as we dressed for dinner, I contemplated the evening that lay before us. In my mind's eye I saw myself chewing the fat with Julie, talking "guy talk," swapping stories, being treated like an "insider."

I tried to prep my wife for the conversation I dreamed would follow. Mind you, my wife is a wonderful, intelligent woman, but comics are really not her avocation. Nonetheless, I was determined to make this night of nights "faux pas-proof."

"Remember," I told her, "no stupid questions, no loose language, and no guttural stomach noises. Watch you table manners. Be nice to the waiters. Use the right fork."

"Will there be anything else?" she asked sharply.

"Yes. Don't ask him about any Marvels, don't ask if he's ever written anything for 'grown ups,' and for God's sake don't use the phrase 'funny book.'"

"I wasn't planning to," she said, sniffing. "I was planning to ask him why anyone would want to put a yellow oval on Batman's chest."

"Well, don't!"

With ever-increasing trepidation, I entered the banquet hall. Boldly, I took the chair next to the man I knew from countless comic book caricatures must be Julius Schwartz. My wife sat between me and a tall, distinguished white-haired fellow

Stammering like Porky Pig, I introduced myself.

"Hello," Julie said. "I don't recognize the name. Are you someone legendary?"

I froze up. "L-l-legendary?" I stammered. "Uhhh, define legendary."

"Legendary," he replied. "Of, constituting, based on, or of the nature of a legend." He winked at the woman on the other side of the table. "I thought only legendary figures were invited to this thing."

I swallowed. "When I was fourteen years old," I said, "I had the biggest string ball in Oklahoma County."

"Really,"Julie said slowly. "Fascinating."

He glanced at the tall, distinguished fellow. "Have you met Gil Kane yet?"

My stomach rose to my throat. Gil Kane! Gil "Green Lantern" Kane? Gil "The Atom" Kane? The premier artist of the Silver Age! It was altogether too much. My tongue disintegrated. I nodded stupidly in Gil's direction.

My wife covered the silence. "May I ask you a question, Mr. Schwartz?"

He beamed at her. "Only if you promise to call me Julie," he said.

A conversation ensued. It was fascinating. Julie told stories of the early days of science fiction, stories of the birth of the Silver Age pantheon of heroes, stories of DC as it entered the corporate era. First person anecdotes about Ray Bradbury, Harlan Ellison, Siegel and Shuster, and Jenette Kahn. Tales of the dark days at DC–of the Crisis, which disassembled his multiuniverse, of the Killing Joke, which crippled his own creation, Barbara Gordon, of the John Byrne Superman, which decreed that everything Julie (and everyone before him) had done with Superman "never happened." It was a wonderful conversation, truly glorious.

Except–he was not talking to me. Mostly, he was speaking across me, to my wife. My wife! The woman who didn't know Hal Jordan from Hal Holbrook. Who thought "The Inferior Five" referred to George Bush's White House staff.

I tried to speak, but I couldn't. The words just would not come. I was tongue-tied, like a schoolboy trying to ask a girl out for the first time. Awe-struck. Hard as I tried, I could not make a meaningful contribution to the conversation, and I was only too aware that this precious time was slowly slipping away.

I despised myself.

My wife, bless her, did her best to draw me in.

"You know, Julie," she said, "my husband is a big fan of yours. The main reason we came to this convention was so that he could see you."

Julie's eyebrows rose.

"That's right," I managed.

"My husband thinks your Silver Age comics are the greatest comics ever produced."

"That's right," I said.

"In fact, my husband has often said he thinks comics would have died out in the fifties, if not for you."

"That's right," I said.

"My husband probably likes your Superman comics best of all," she continued. "He's a big Superman aficionado."

"That's right," I said.

Julie nodded his head and, at last, turned his attention to me. "You're a Superman fan?" he asked.

"That's right," I said.

He smiled, "Well, let me tell you something about Superman." He looked cautiously from side to side. "This is a major secret. In fact, there's only one other person on earth other than me who knows this."

His eyebrows danced up and down.

"You see, most people think that Superman is... But the truth is...." He leaned close to me and whispered into my ear.

Zowie! After that, everything was fine. I was cured. I could talk again. I engaged fully in an animated once-in-a-lifetime conversation with Julie, Gil and Gil's wife. Julie told jokes. Gil talked about the Superman artist "so bad the character might as well have been sealed up in a crypt." Gil's wife told stories of how the wives of other great comic figures drove them to ruin. Julie accepted several awards on behalf of DC Comics and, while presenting the Hall of Fame award, gave a noble speech on how it was ridiculous to admit only one person to the Hall of Fame a year, when there were so many truly wonderful Golden Age pioneers still unrecognized. He named names, and they were good names. Better than the nominated names.

At last, inevitably, the evening drew to a close. We said our fond farewells, and my wife and I returned to our hotel room. I was happy, content, at peace with the universe. Like Caesar, Galileo and Quayle before me, I had experienced my turning point, my magic moment, something I would treasure for all time.

And that's the story of my dinner with Julie.

What's that you say? You want to know what the secret was–the incredible, amazing, unbelievable, enchanted thing that I know about Superman and you don't?

You must be kidding. ■

William Bernhardt is a nationally recognized mystery writer. His article, My Dinner With Julie, was originally published in CBM *#6.*

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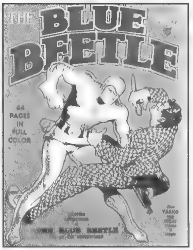

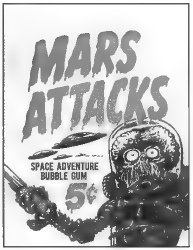

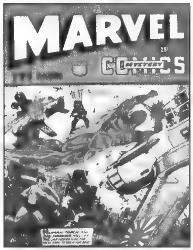

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CAPTAIN COMET... Man of Tomorr

I consider myself to be conservative (i.e., adhering to traditional methods, views or conditions) in only one aspect of my life... my attitude toward heroes. If I become attached to a character, whether in comics, TV or written fiction, I like consistency, just as I would in a real person. I like the aspects of the character which caused my initial admiration to remain intact. Since I began reading comics over thirty years ago, that preference has been sorely tested.

The situation with Captain Comet is a particular case in point. When I began a short-lived tenure as a DC Comics writer in the early '80s, I had a clear picture of who the "real" Captain Comet was, from his powers to his appearance to his moral code. The problem was that none of it was based on the appearances of the character in the prior five or six years, but rather on the original series of stories which had appeared in *Strange Adventures* from 1951 to 1954.

By the time I presented a mini-series proposal, the character had been so poorly served in his recent appearances that my story was shot down because management apparently disliked the character.

(This was in the pre-Crisis On Infinite Earths period, just after DC had decided that the thirty-year team of Superman and Batman didn't work (?!). Batman had only just begun becoming more extreme in his methodology (thanks to Frank Miller), and the move didn't seem logical to me then (and still doesn't), although, admittedly, the Batman of the past decade is certainly devoid of some of the aspects which made him half of a perfect team despite their differing abilities.)

In contrast to the apparent views of DC management, I loved the character of Captain Comet... he seemed to be the prototype for all of the Julius Schwartz-edited hero revivals of the late '50's, with many adventures anticipating concepts used to better effect later (Super Gorilla Grodd, the Guardians of the Universe, even the chess match in the first issue of Justice League Of America); this seemed perfectly apt, as his nickname was the Man of Tomorrow.

But who is Captain Comet and what are his special powers? The original premise of the character goes something like this:

Due to an accidental mutation (POSSIBLY due to the presence of a comet at birth), Adam Blake was determined by Prof. Zackro to be a man born 100,000 years before his time (*SA*#9). He lives in Midwest City (*SA*#12).

Through training, his telepathy (*SA*#9), telekinesis (*SA*#9), physical power and sheer intellectual capability are honed to perfection (*SA*#9), though to maintain peak efficiency he must constantly train (*SA*#43).

He builds a ground-to-space intergalactic space ship called the Cometeer (*SA*#10), which he can control remotely by mind-power (*SA*#12) and land on Earth, and creates Spectrum-Drive (*SA*#14), his lightspeed-exceeding means of travel; he can view exterior sights via ship's Visiplate (*SA*#35). His sidearm holster carries a Paralo-Gun (*SA*#30).

In besting legions of crooks, invaders, bullies, super-apes (*SA*#32 and 39), and intergalactic scoundrels of all types, he exhibits these abilities: photographic memory (*SA*#9), instant learning (*SA*#9), immunity to acid (*SA*#10), immunity to

BY MIKE TIEFENBACHER

Continued on page 46

ow!
STRANGE ADVENTURES
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radiation (*SA*#10), immunity to electric shock (*SA*#14), immunity to fatigue (*SA*#15), immunity to ray-blasts (*SA*#21), immunity to bruises or cuts (*SA*#29), immunity to fire (*SA*#30), immunity to gas (unless he's not defending himself against it, *SA*#31), and immunity to any other poison (his body produces antibodies once he's exposed to any disease and he becomes automatically immune).

In addition, he has the ability to see radio waves (*SA*#10), to feel color physically (*SA*#10), use telematic force (or mind-over-matter) powers (*SA*#9 and 14) though these are seldom-used (*SA*#42, 46), force-field (*SA*#14), astral projection (*SA*#16), read thought-waves broadcast over television (*SA*#17), withstand ocean-floor pressures (*SA*#20), withstand cold by upping body temperature to 160 degrees (*SA*#22), see radiation with Futuristic Vision (*SA*#22), go without breathing for long, extended periods of time (*SA*#24), and reverse evolutionary supernova effect by will power (*SA*#40).

He is master of his atomic structure, able to become "immaterial" when hit by an otherwise lethal ray-blast (*SA*#43). He cannot, however, travel through time without losing his memory due to flaws in the design of another inventor's time machine (*SA*#41). Nor is he even shown flying independently of his ship.

His feats are known worldwide and inter-galactically; his face appears in newspapers (*SA*#30, et al.). His fellow librarian, Lucy Torrence, notices Captain Comet's resemblance to Adam Blake (*SA*#31), though Zackro is the sole person on Earth who knows his secret identity.

He's very nearly more super than Superman! (His uniform–with its flight harness straps–and ray gun, Murphy Anderson's previous experience with Buck Rogers, and Prof. Zackro's name's resemblance to that of Dr. Zarkov, make it obvious that Captain Comet was meant to be DC's version of Flash Gordon… with super-powers–and without Dale Arden.)

The John Broome-written stories, with only minor exceptions, were intelligent and highly entertaining to someone like me whose tastes were imprinted by mid-'60's comics. The art was done by Murphy Anderson, whom I had chosen as my favorite within weeks of beginning to collect comics. But mostly, I think, it was the visceral visual appeal of the predominantly red costume. There's just something edemically HEROIC about a brilliant red costume.

Perhaps the saddest fact for those of us who remember him with abiding fondness is that very few people will ever get to read those original stories. Until the day occurs that *Strange Adventures* appears on microfiche–or, taking a cue from Captain Comet and looking further into the future, on CD-ROM, even the independently wealthy would have a hard time assembling a set of all 38 of the original issues featuring Captain Comet. Until that day, we'll have to try to make do. Following are the notes I took while rereading the *Strange Adventures* stories. While not verbatim plot synopses, they supply enough of the flavour, and all of the pertinent facts, I think, for you to see what has continued to attract me to the character after all these years…

Captain Comet in Strange Adventures

(with 1997 Overstreet values for GD, FN, and NM)

"THE ORIGIN OF CAPTAIN COMET"

(*Strange Adventures* #9 , Jun 1951, $162 $487 $1,300) - John and Martha Blake had a son named Adam (named after his grandfather) two decades ago just as a comet appeared in the sky. John says "Our son is bound to become a great man! Look at that sign in the sky!" (i.e., the comet). Adam inexplicably found his mother's lost ring when he was four years old. His mother had always hoped he'd be average, but he evinced a photographic memory by age eight and in high school played a Mozart clarinet concerto the first time he picked up the instrument.

In college, he was star quarterback (his letter sweater says either "TH" or "HT"). In his senior year, he saved a girl's life by telekinetically preventing her from falling off a fifteen-foot hill. He visited Professor Emery Zackro, a physicist, to help him figure out what went on. He took an ESP test and got 100%, exercised with no sign of fatigue. Zackro determined that Adam is an accidental mutation of future man with abilities which probably will not be common for 100,000 years. His powers had to be strenghtened through practice.

When Zackro was set upon by crooks who overheard his revelation of a "Solar Reducer" which extracted gold particles from the air, they encountered Adam's great strength, his ability to stop a bullet with his

COVERS © 1997 DC

Now in higher demand than even the first issue, SA #9s compelling black cover (facing page) plus its Captain Comet origin make it one of the most sought after pre-Code DC comics.

mind, and even his proficiency at fisticuffs.

Adam and Zackro determine that he should keep his identity a secret if he wished to prevent evil men from trying to put his abilities to their own use. He adopts the name and costume of Captain Comet.

Note: the costume details and coloring of Comet's costume vary subtly from issue to issue, though his flight harness doesn't disappear until late in the *Strange Adventures* run.

"THE AIR BANDITS FROM SPACE"

(*Strange Adventures* #10, Jul 1951, $71 $215 $575) - Comet's tests of his abilities include drinking beakers of acid with no ill effects. When he detects alien radiation in Earth's atmosphere and traces it to invading space tops, he discovers he's immune to it as well, though the tops are sucking up atmosphere and killing normal humans. He views radio waves by viewing them through completely black glass. He builds the Cometeer to visit the far side of the moon where the alien ship controlling the tops is concealed. He defeats the alien in a battle of wits by FEELING the difference in color of a pellet in a jar. The aliens wind up dead and can't colonize anything, and Comet returns to Earth to (understandably) great acclaim.

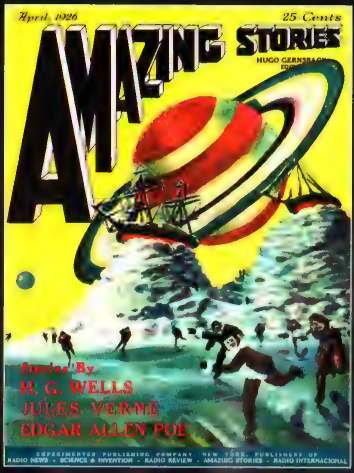
"THE DAY THE PAST CAME BACK"

(*Strange Adventures* #11, Aug 1951,$51 $153 $410) - His job as Library Information Clerk allows Adam to do a lot of outside research, explaining his many disappearances over the years. Dr. Alex Philador, an old crony of Zackro's, uses an evolution-reverser on things, turning reptiles to dinosaurs, humans to apes, and changes everyone including Comet into an ape-man. Comet, though, is 100,000 years ahead of all the others, and reverses the machine. Lucy Torrence, Adam Blake's co-worker, makes her first appearance (as a blonde). Capitol City appears in this story.

"THE GIRL FROM THE DIAMOND PLANET"

(*Strange Adventures* #12, Sep 1951, $51 $153 $410) - Midwest City is specifically named for the first time (till this point it had only been a lower-case description); Lucy is called "Lily Torrence" (and she's a brunette). Comet says no girl could ever hold his interest ("I must put all girls out of mind and concentrate on my main purpose in life–the advancement of science– forever!"

Continued on page 63)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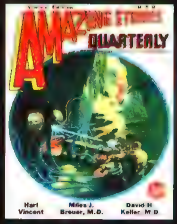
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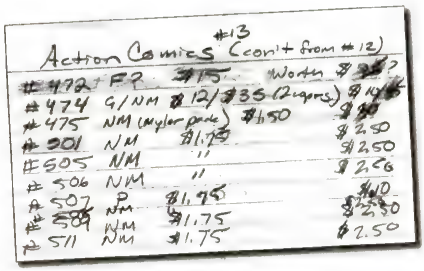

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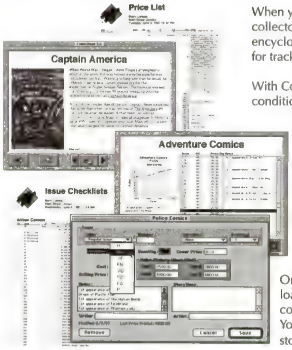

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KRYPTON-SHATTERING REVELATIONS!

The Big Bang Theory of Comic Book History

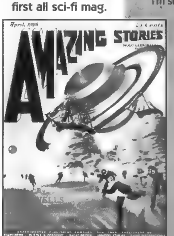
by Robert Beerbohm

Notice how the rocket ship in Joe Shuster's painting for the 1942 hardback novel Superman closely resembles the rocket on an earlier Gernsback Science and Invention cover (see page 54).

If Julie Schwartz hadn't worked on the first fanzine, known creators Siegel & Shuster, been a science fiction literary agent, published fan addresses in the early '60s... there might never have been Sci-Fi Fandom, Superman, the Silver Age, Comic Fandom, or CBM!

It was the Summer of 1928 and thirteen-year-old Julius Schwartz was reading Murray Leinster's "The Runaway Skyscraper" in the June 1926 issue of Hugo Gernsback's *Amazing Stories*. This story started a life-long love affair with a genre of fiction that Gernsback called "scientifiction" (a contraction of scientific fiction). Then in the Spring 1930 issue of Gernsback's *Science Wonder Quarterly*, a description of a science fiction club appeared . . . and caught Julie's attention because it was right there in New York. Teenage Julie came to join a club of fellow fans, The Scienceers, at a meeting held in the basement of Mort Weisinger's home in the Bronx. Arriving just as everybody was storming away in anger (and not knowing what the problem was), Julie was the only one who stayed. Julie and Mort talked for hours. Said Julie, "We met that day when we were each around sixteen and from that moment on, we stayed lifelong friends. "

Amazing #1 the first all sci-fi mag.



Since July of 1930, this fledgling organization had been publishing a club "newsletter," *The Planet*, mimeographed by Philip Rosenblatt, solely for its members. Allen Glasser was the editor; Mort had been its enthusiastic associate editor since inception.

After The Scienceers club re-formed, Julie recounted, "Mort and I made a case to the group that we should be interested in doing more than discussing the stories in the magazines we devoured. We wanted to know how they came about; we wanted to know more about the writers, the editors and illustrators . . . what these idols of ours were working on. We decided to compile a Who's Who of contemporary science fiction. We wanted to see into the future of what was being developed, so we sent out letters."

The Time Traveller Connection

Within a short period of time, Mort and Julie decided to try producing a national magazine about science fiction priced at a dime a copy, or twelve issues for a dollar. Philip Rosenblatt agreed to mimeo this new zine. Julie explained, "We rounded up several other better known fans of the day to supply us with news and gossip. Among them was a fifteen-years-young Forrest J. Ackerman, our associate 'Scientifilm' editor from Hollywood who years later coined the term 'sci-fi' [while driving in his car, Forrey heard the term Hi Fi on the car radio, short for High Fidelity, and thought 'Hi Fi . . . Sci Fi!'], Linus Hogenmiller, Jack Darrow and Allen Glasser," the nominal "pro" of the group who was asked to be the Chief Editor. Julie was Managing Editor and Mort was listed as another Associate Editor.

Julie drew inspiration for the title of this new "fan" zine after having read H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine* and was inspired to call it *The Time Traveller*. Julie remembered, "I sat down at my typewriter, and it just came to me out of the blue. 'The Time Traveller' was typed at the top of a one page biography I wrote about Edward 'Doc' Smith based on a letter he had sent us. I was into Briticisms at the time, so I insisted on spelling the title with two Ls. We wanted to travel into the future and report what was out there to other fans."

In a letter to Forrey dated early November 1931, Julie wrote: "...The Time Traveller is on its way (to) becoming a reality. Mort, Allen and I are working hard getting the material for the first issue together...."

On November 18, 1931, Julie wrote to Forrey again: "We've decided that advertising will be 2¢ a word. If any of your friends wish to advertise for old science-fiction classics, or back nos. of Amazing Stories tell him to write to me. All money goes to me, the rest of (the) inquiries send to Glasser's address. You can either send the news to Mort or Glasser or even me. As long as you send it!"

Sam Moskowitz wrote in his seminal history of science fiction fandom, *The Immortal Storm*, that *The Time Traveller* was the first national fanzine devoted solely to the genre of speculative fiction. The brain child of Julie and Mort debuted in January 1932. In fact, the *CBM* that you hold in your hands right now is the great-great-grandchild of what these teenagers devised more than 65 years ago!

They sent out free copies of the first issue to letter writers whose addresses came out of Gernsback's *Science Wonder Stories* and *Amazing Stories*, plus gleanings from *Astounding Stories* and the few other pulp magazines that regularly carried scientifiction type stories. In addition, they prepared a flyer prior to publication to solicit badly needed subscriptions.

Julie wrote Forrey on November 29, 1931: "...The circulars announcing the mag are all ready and

Siegel's "Amazing" Letter

Editor, *Amazing Stories*:

I'm starting my letter off with a request which I am sure will be seconded by a large host of *Amazing Stories* readers. What I wish you would do is to reprint A. Merritt's story, "Through the Dragon Glass," which appeared in the *All Story* magazine years ago. Also some stones written for the same magazine by Austin Hall, Ralph Farley and Homer E. Flint. In the "Discussions" column of the May issue of *Amazing Stories*, 1929, a reader by the name of Tod Hunter said he would like to know of a story called "The Invisible Professor." The correct name is "The Vanishing Professor" and its author is Fred McIssac. I read the story when it appeared and I can safely say any scientifiction reader would enjoy it thoroughly.

I'm for reprints, but I do not mean the ones that were written so long ago that their forecasts have come true. I am also in favor of your reprinting "The Blind Spot," even though I've already read it. And, Editor, if you are undecided as to whether or not to print it, you should hurry along with your decision, for the readers of the magazine in which it originally appeared are voting whether they should have it reprinted or not.

By the way, will your readers please stop casting slurs at Weird Tales magazine? I buy every issue of *Argosy*, *Weird Tales* and "*Our*" magazine as they appear, for all have the same authors or most of them. They list: 1. Edmond Hamilton, 2. David H. Keller, 3. A. Merritt, 4. Clare W. Harris, 5. Ray Cummings, 6. Murray Leinster, etc., etc. So you see when you criticize that type of fiction appearing in these magazines, you are in turn throwing dirt on yourselves.

And, Editor, give us another cover (story) contest. I have written many science stories, amateurishly, and I can hardly hold myself in restraint, when I know that some of my friends who have also written science stories galore, chiefly among them, John Reibel, author of "Voice from the Moon," also of "Emperor of Ten Worlds," both Sunday Times, and Bernard Kantor, author of "Invisible World" and "Beyond This Finite World," are also waiting for a chance to number as contributors to "*Our*" magazine.

Jerome Siegel
10622 Kimberly Ave, Cleveland, Ohio

Joe Shuster's "Star" of Toronto

BY HENRY MIETKIEWICZ

By the time he was hawking The Daily Star in downtown Toronto...9-year-old Joe Shuster had already come to believe he was selling more than mere newspapers. To this ambitious newsboy The Star was a passport to wonder. Within its pages, Joe had discovered the fantasy world of the color comics.

Even working as a Star newsboy had long-range effects. By peddling papers amid such imposing office towers as the old Star building on King St. W., Joe was exposed to sights and sounds that would later be incorporated into Superman's home town of Metropolis. When Superman debuted in 1938, the Toronto-born cartoonist (who moved to Cleveland at the age of 10)...gave the name "The Daily Star" to the Metropolis newspaper that employed Superman's alter-ego, mild-mannered reporter Clark Kent.

Joe remembers sharing the comics with his dad, Julius, even before he could read:

"In those days, color comics were published on a large scale. They would devote an entire page to one comic, usually with vivid colors- very bright, vivid colors. We had a ritual. We would both open up the color comics and my father would read all the dialogue and balloons. I remember the Katzenjammer Kids, Boob McNutt, Happy Hooligan, and Barney Google.

"But my sharpest memory is of Little Nemo. It was a very imaginative strip, and it even had a touch of science fiction in it. It had marvelous scenes- Winsor McCay's depiction of the city of the future, the planets- all the things I loved...that turned me on to fantasy and science fiction."

Clark Kent reads "The Daily Star" in a panel from Action #1.

are being sent out within a few days. The latest news is that the first issue will be dated January 1932, a fine time to start, don't you think so?...I hope we get a lot of subscribers–we have to, to keep the magazine going. I hope you persuade nearly all of your correspondents to subscribe. By the way, how many correspondents have you got anyway? We think you have over a hundred. How close are we?...Allen works...I go to school...Mort lives out in Passaic...I see Allen every Friday night, and once in a while Mort manages to come. But Saturday night is the big meeting. All the editors have to come!...we go to our real meeting place–*The Automat*!! With coffee and cake we discuss matters way into the night. I didn't get home until 3 o'clock in the morning! So you see that we're doing as much as possible for TTT here in NY."

On December 10, 1931, Forrey was informed by Julie: "Undoubtedly you have received the 125 circulars that Allen has sent you. I hope that you'll send them out to your correspondents quickly... We don't want to run it at a loss. So the quicker the subscribers send in their money–the quicker the paper will come out...127 correspondents! Man alive! How do you do it? How do you remember what you've written to each correspondent? I simply can't understand it. It seems to me that at least 100 of those subscribers ought to come across with a subscription to 777. Do they all write that regularly?"

January 9, 1932 an anxious Julie writes his California friend: "Well, I guess you must have received my news about the change in TTT–about it being mimeographed. It's almost ready now, and you'll receive some copies a few days after you receive this letter. I hope you won't feel bad about it, but you can bet your boots that we did our best. If we get a lot of subscriptions you may be sure it'll improve. Did you notice that the mag is advertised in The Author and Journalist–a writer's magazine? Ralph Milne Farley has an article in the same issue...Farley (who sent in a subscription, God bless him!) said we could run his "The Time Traveller" in TTT if we wanted to. In case you don't know it, it was published in the August 1931 W.T, which is too recent for our needs."

The first issue had approximately thirty subscribers and six mimeographed pages. According to a 1937 article Julie wrote explaining 777's history:

"The contents consisted of a biography of Capt. S. P. Meek, a brief interview with Bob Olsen (and) a list of scientifilms by Ackerman, the first installment of The History of Science Fiction by Mort Weisinger (which ran for seven more installments and got as far as Jules Verne), a science fiction contest, an article on O. A. Kline's The Planet of Peril by Julie (using the pseudonym of John Zumbach a friend of Julie's who loaned his new typewriter that got better results on the mimeo stencil than Julies "second-hand clunker"), and dozens of news items about authors and their forthcoming stories.

In the introduction explaining why *The Time Traveller* had been produced, the editors wrote: "During the past few years, there has grown up in this country a class of literature–or reading matter, if you will–known generally as Science Fiction.

"It is hardly necessary to define the term to readers of this magazine; but it may be said to include all fiction of a scientific or fantastic nature. Stories of this type are not in themselves a new development in literature; they have appeared in one form or another since man began to give play to his imagination.

"It is only recently, however, that Science Fiction has captured public interest to any noticeable degree. There are no less than eight magazines now using Science Fiction exclusively or as a regular part of their contents. And there are a growing number of books, plays and films of the science-fantasy type.

"In view of this wide current popularity of Science Fiction, it was deemed advisable to launch a magazine treating all the varied phases of the subject and appealing to the interests of its many devotees. And so came into being THE TIME TRAVELLER–the first and only Science Fiction fan magazine. We hope you like it!"

On January 18, 1932, Julie answered an enthusiastic letter from Forrey: "I'm glad that you are so thrilled over the first issue of THE TIME TRAVELLER. Now our aim is to improve it–and the method of doing so is to get more subscribers!...We're preparing for the next issue now, and we want more news–a lot more–so deluge us with it, huh?"

In the pages of *The Amazing World of DC* #3 (November, 1974), Mort Weisinger said of his friend,

This phenomenal Weird Tales cover painting by J. Allen St. John neatly packages an all-star issue that includes that dynamic duo, Jack Williamson and Edmond Hamilton... as well as the least-known of WT's three "masters of the weird" (along with H.P. Lovecraft and Robert E. Howard), Clark Ashton Smith.

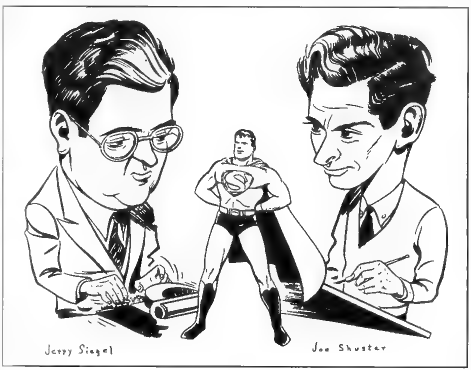
'Julie pioneered a new sort of fan journalism. People would read science fiction stories, but they never wondered who was behind the bylines. Julie came up with some remarkable scoops involving pseudonyms of very famous authors. He was the Walter Winchell of the science fiction world. This is what made our magazine very vital and exciting. We didn't just have the news; we dug behind the news."

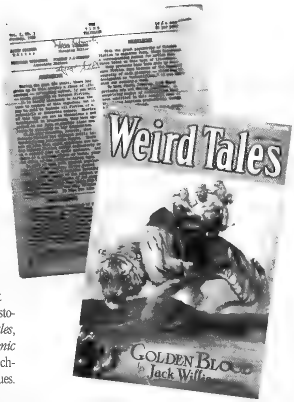
The Siegel & Shuster Connection

Sometime in 1929, a couple of years prior to Julie's legendary fanzine, a fourteen-year-old youngster in Cleveland, Ohio named Jerome Siegel produced the first scientifiction fan effort with carbon paper copies of *Cosmic Stories* and *Cosmic Stories Quarterly*. These consisted of stories which the enthusiastic boy had attempted to get placed in *Amazing Stories* and *Weird Tales*, but had been rejected. There couldn't have been more than eight copies of any given issue of *Cosmic Stories* produced before the carbon paper wore out. In conversations I had with the late and much-missed Sam Moskowitz, he hinted several times that he had copies of at least a couple of issues. However, no confirmed copies are known by this writer to still exist.

Back then, Siegel seemingly wasn't quite old enough to have the financial means necessary to take advantage of better methods of printing that would have enabled him to make up more than a few carbon paper copies. After analysis of a Jerry Siegel letter (which appeared in the August 1929 issue of *Amazing Stories*), my guess is that he made up the first issues of *Cosmic Stories* because he was frustrated that his stories were rejected, thereby becoming an early self-publisher (*see page 51*).

It was known Jerry had a Cleveland friend by the name of Bernard Kantor. Coincidentally, Jerry also was known to use a pseudonym of Bernard J. Kenton. Kantor also contributed to *Science Fiction*. Sam Moskowitz tracked down Bernard Kantor many years ago. He came away with 1939 correspondence between Jerry and Bernard (which Julie now has) specifically commenting about $50 the former was paying the latter for a Superman plot. In a letter dated October 8, 1939 (when Jerry was located at Electra Court, Apt A-38, 40-15 81st Street, Jackson Heights, L.I., N.Y.) he wrote to his long-time friend and collaborator in Cleveland:





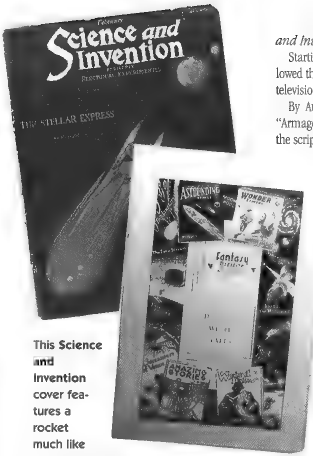
Brought together through Gernsback's letter columns, Julie Schwartz and Mort Weisinger became a fanatic SF team and published the first sci-fi fanzine... The Time Traveller #1 (Jan 1932).

"Enclosed herewith please find a fifty dollar bill which is payment for the assistance I received from your Superman plot... I'm glad that I got in touch with you at this time when you will be able to use the income from selling me Superman plots. Payments will always reach you just as promptly as I can ascertain whether my version of your synopses are acceptable to the editors."

This same letter informs Bernard that Jerry has just come up with "a new fantastic character strip, The Spectre, start(ing) on the February 1940 issue of More Fun Comics)." If he has any possible plots to please pass them along. According to Julie Schwartz, "Jerry stopped buying Superman plots from Kantor because Kantor had tried to put one over on Jerry by naming a character 'Bordello.'"

All of this feverish activity by these inspired teenagers beginning in the late 1920s was due mainly to the efforts of Hugo Gernsback. Joe Shuster said in an early 1980's interview, "We were both great science fiction fans, reading *Amazing Stories* and *Wonder Stories* in those days."

Shuster's caricature of Jerry and himself captures the look and spirit of the immortal team that created Superman.



This Science and Invention cover features a rocket much like the one in Joe Shuster's 1942 Krypton painting (see page 50).

The April 1935 issue of Fantasy Magazine featured cover re-creations by Clay Ferguson.

The Gernsback Connection

Hugo Gernsback was a genius who got into publishing in 1908 with a magazine called *Modern Electrics*. Gernsback originally arrived from Luxembourg in 1904 at the age of nineteen. In 1906 he marketed the world's first commercial home ham radio set (called Telimco Wireless), which could both send and receive. It is even more amazing when one considers that there were, as yet, no transmitting stations!

In 1911, Gernsback invented the concept of radar in a short story in *Modern Electrics* called "Ralph 124C41+." Around this same time, he also opened up the world's first radio store… which helped his new publication, *Electrical Experimenter* (which earlier replaced *Modern Electrics*) to survive. Gernsback soon expanded the concept and changed the title to *Science and Invention*, allowing him to further the scope of his interests and ideas.

Starting the first all "science fiction" magazine in 1926 entitled *Amazing Stories*, Gernsback followed that up two years later by being the first person in the United States to set up a live commercial television station at a time when there were only an estimated eight TV sets in all of New York City!

By August 1928, the prototype of Buck Rogers first appeared in *Amazing* in a story called "Armageddon–2419" by Philip F. Nolan. Four months later, on January 7, 1929 (with Nolan supplying the scripts and the art coming from Dick Calkins) the Buck Rogers daily newspaper strip debuted. In November 1932, Buck Rogers was riding the radio waves coast to coast along with a flood of character merchandise that was quite innovative in concept, design, and graphics. Buck Rogers was introducing newspaper comic strip readers to the concepts of science fiction. But it was Gernsback's original sense of wonder in running the story that first brought Buck Rogers to the public's eye!

The August 1928 *Amazing* is not only historic because it contained the first Buck Rogers story, but also because it contains the first installment of Edward E. Smith's *The Skylark of Space* and was also the first issue that Mort Weisinger ever saw. Mort immediately began collecting every issue of *Amazing Stories*, *Science and Invention* and *Electrical Experimenter* he could lay his hands on. Moskowitz noted in *The Immortal Storm* that "the great thrill of (Mort's) young life was a personal visit to Hugo Gernsback while that man was still publishing *Amazing Stories*."

It's now well known that Frank R. Paul and Alex Schomburg, two of Gernsback's main artists, inspired many future comic book artists. Their dazzling visions of the future as well as contemporary concepts of outer space beautifully visualized on color covers and in innumerable black and white interior illustrations are legendary. In 1925 Schomburg had wandered into Gernsback's offices to get a radio fixed (a set that he had purchased from Gernsback via mail order). After that historic meeting, Alex left with his first art assignments for *Science and Invention*. They maintained their friendship until Hugo's death in 1957. Alex stated in later interviews that he still has fond memories of the person who gave him one of his first paying art jobs.

I once heard someone ask Jack Kirby at a comic book convention what inspired the look of the monsters on the late 1950s Atlas/Marvel comics, at which time he began talking about the covers and interior artwork of Frank R. Paul and others that graced many a Gernsback publication.

Martin Goodman (of Timely/Atlas/Marvel fame) was one of many who learned the publishing business from Gernsback, first working for him in the circulation department of *Amazing Stories* for over seven years before striking out on his own in 1933. Goodman later created Marvel Comics in 1939. Also, Goodman first met Alex Schomburg at Gernsback's office and ultimately used Frank R. Paul's art on the covers of *Marvel Comics* #1 and *Marvel Mystery* #2.

Louis B. Silberkleit was also an early employee and student of Hugo Gernsback during the same time period. Starting in 1927, he functioned as circulation director for Hugo's magazines. He went on to become a principal behind MLJ/Archie comics after a stint as Goodman's partner from 1932 through 1939 (in a pulp publishing company called *Red Circle*). Together, they were publishing pulp magazines that were modeled after Gernsback publications. Hugo had apparently taught them well as they would both become very successful. MLJ started publishing comic books in 1939 as well, and is still publishing them today (under the Archie imprint) as a family-owned business.

The Weird Tales Connection

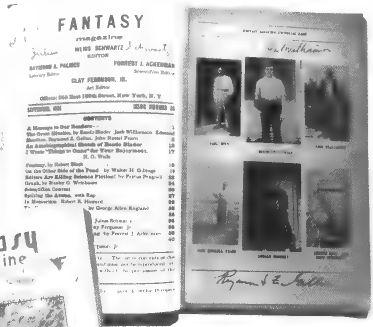
A legendary fantasy magazine/pulp titled *Weird Tales* began in 1923, three years before *Amazing Stories*. It ran stories by many who became famous, notably, H. P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, Edmond Hamilton, Clark Ashton Smith, August Derleth, Robert Bloch, and Ray Bradbury. *Weird Tales* also had pages devoted to fans letters, called "The Eyrie," but they didn't include a letter writer's full address.

Jerry Siegel wrote in the November 1930 issue of *Weird Tales*: "I have never written in before, but have decided to do so after reading the unusually fine issue of August. Edmond Hamilton is at his best and he is sure to be acclaimed once more by the readers who had begun to tire of his routine plots. I am glad to learn that he's decided to write stories whose plots are more variable. Another good story was

our faithful August W. Derleth's. His short tales are masterpieces of realism. The Electric Executioner by Adolphe de Castro was very entertaining. I read this author's The Last Test in your magazine some time ago and thought it one of the best weird tales ever written. Edmond Hamilton's Pigmy Island is in my opinion easily the best story in the issue. The weird sensation of being but a foot tall and confronted by huge rats was vividly told."

The first of three fan letters written by Julie Schwartz appeared in the October 1931 issue of *Weird Tales*: "I read my first Weird Tales about four months ago, and was so pleased with it I bought all the back numbers of Weird Tales I could lay my hands on. My favorite stories are the science-fiction type. Many readers claim that Edmond Hamilton always uses the same plot, and should therefore be barred from Weird Tales. Mebbe so, but these readers got to admit the situations his heroes get into, and the weird and fantastic enemies that attack our earth, were never heard of before in the annals of science-fiction. The best story in the August issue was The Earth-Owners by Edmond Hamilton, and is closely

The Time Traveller became Science Fiction Digest, which evolved into Fantasy Magazine.



followed by Lovecraft's weird and unusual tale, The Whisperer in Darkness." (Julie's other two letters appeared in the April 1932 and May 1933 issues.)

An interesting letter appears right above Julie's from a William C. Levere of Connecticut who also commented, "Edmond Hamilton is in my opinion your best author… His Interstellar Patrol stories are also very fine." Hamilton's Interstellar Patrol series is similar to the "Interplanetary Police" strip Jerry kept alluding to, that was in constant development for possible acceptance. It's clear that everyone seemed to love Edmond Hamilton's work.

Weird Tales had an active fan following, but there was no easy way for any of their fans to get in contact with each other. It is Hugo Gernsback who was directly responsible for actively inspiring a generation of creative talent who produced some great comic books. Without Gernsback's publications, his encouragement of fan interaction, and his publishing full addresses of all the fan letter writers in "Discussions," comic book fandom (and fandom's effect on the comic book industry) would have taken an entirely different path!

Thirty years later (in 1961) it was Julius Schwartz (following a pattern introduced in Gernsback's *Amazing Stories*) who would plant the seeds of modern comic book fandom. When Julie began letter columns in his Silver Age superhero revivals, he ran the letters with full addresses!

The Fanzine Connection

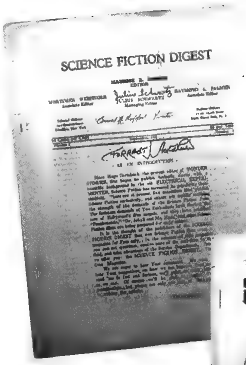
Like Julius Schwartz and Mort Weisinger, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster were a team by 1931, and they too, sought to publish a fanzine. Amazingly, these four future-chroniclers of the adventures of Kal-El of Krypton began interacting on a regular basis through the mail while still teenagers.

In a letter to Forrey Ackerman dated February 8, 1932 (just a short while after *777* #1 came out and a full eight months before Jerry and Joe managed to get their own first issue published) Julie wrote: "Heh, heh, heh!! I'm sorry, but I (already) knew about the magazine called Science-Fiction. Allen received a letter from them (Jerry and Joe) asking him to submit a few stories. As I understand the letter (Allen allowed me to read it) it is not going to be sold on the newsstands. But probably I misunderstood this. I forgot the publishers' names, but they are only kids like ourselves (about 20 years old.) They pay from 1/2 to 3¢ a word. You can be sure that they will only receive the 1/2 a cent rate. I doubt if the magazine will succeed. Have you any more information?"

This shows that Jerry Siegel had responded to the initial subscription flyer sent to him in December, 1931 because of his August, 1929 letter in *Amazing Stories*.

After two mimeographed issues, one of *The Time Traveller*'s subscribers (Queen's resident Conrad H. Ruppert) offered to hand set the type and print each subsequent issue on his recently acquired printing press. Sam Moskowitz wrote in *The Immortal Storm*, "To most present day fans Conrad H. Ruppert is an all but unknown name, but his part in creating for fandom the finest set of periodicals it has ever produced is a story of unbelievable devotion to science fiction. He painstakingly set by hand every issue of The Time Traveller from then on… the fact that (the later issues of Science Fiction Digest and *Fantasy Magazine*) rarely were less than 30,000 words in length and appeared on a regular monthly schedule gives the reader a rough notion of the amount of work involved. Ruppert's contribution to the field would be difficult to estimate." Conrad went on to print many of the most legendary fan publications of the 1930s.

The Time Traveller ran for eight issues with Julie and Mort involved in the production. Then they parted company with Allen Glasser and formed a corporation called the Science Fiction Digest Company, owned by partners Weisinger, Schwartz, Ruppert, Ackerman and Maurice Z.


SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST

Science Fiction Digest #1 (Sep 1932) was the successor to The Time Traveller.

Fantasy Magazine's "fourth anniversary issue" (Sep 1936) showcased an excellent Clay Ferguson cover.

Ingher. The teenagers were equal shareholders each invested $25. The first issue of a new improved "fanzine" with the name *Science Fiction Digest* first appeared in September, 1932. *The Time Traveller* planted many seeds inside the slowly growing group becoming known as "science fiction fandom."

One month after *Science Fiction Digest* debuted, Jerome Siegel and Joe Shuster finally published a new fanzine of their own titled simply *Science Fiction* (October, 1932). Never leaving the world of mimeography, despite an unbridled enthusiasm (that is infectious to read now even after all these years), its physical appearance remained an awkward second cousin to the vastly superior *Science Fiction Digest*.

In the "Spilling the Atoms with RAP" column in *SFD* #2 (October, 1932) Raymond A. Palmer wrote: "Science Fiction is a new Scientifiction magazine being put out for private subscription by Jerome Siegel. We are informed that subscriptions are $1.50 per year. Judging by the list of authors who will write for SCIENCE FICTION, it will be well worth the price. The address is 10622 Kimberly Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio. A scientifiction novelty is given with each yearly subscription." Raymond Palmer was also supplying short story fiction to Jerry for use in *Science Fiction*.

To quote from Moskowitz's *The Immortal Storm* once again, "In Cleveland, Ohio, Jerome Siegel and Joseph Shuster surveyed The Time Traveller and one of the seeds sprouted. The magazine's policy was a mistake, they decided. What fandom really needed was a publication devoted mainly to fiction and having a minimum of fan-chatter. After all, the main thing people were interested in was science fiction itself... Its contents were of reasonably good quality. The editors managed to get material from such well-known writers as Raymond A. Palmer and Clare Winger Harris. Siegel himself wrote under the nom de plume of Bernard J. Kenton.

Moskowitz continued: "Shuster's artistic abilities were in evidence also, and turned out well despite the limited medium of the stencil with which he contended. Today Science Fiction is a collector's item of extreme rarity; few fans possess copies of it, and these are rarely known to change hands."

The first issue of *Science Fiction* announced it was "The Advance Guard of Future Civilization" and Jerome Siegel was the Editor. *Science Fiction* #1 did not sport any of Joe's slowly blossoming artistry. Instead it conveyed exciting verbiage, beginning with "WEIRD! FANTASTIC! FUTURISTIC!" on the front cover. (*See text inset on facing page.*)

Following Julie's letter of comment in *Science Fiction*, another loyal reader (Daniel McPhail) informed editor Jerry Siegel: "...I was surprised and delighted with the many improvements. Most important of these are the modernistic cover and the inside illustrations. I wish to congratulate Shuster on his excellent drawings. Please have more of them next month..."

Jerry penned this response: ("We are glad that you like the work of our Art Editor. He is rapidly gaining an enthusiastic following. He and the Editor have collaborated on a cartoon-strip INTERPLANETARY POLICE which received the approval of a newspaper syndicate and is now in the process of being revised... –Editor)

The "Interplanetary Police" was the very first strip Jerry and Joe created together, having its roots date back to their first meetings in May 1931. Jerry said in 1984, "Joe and I were ardent science fiction fans. Both of our first two comic creations were science fiction, action adventure strips." *SF* #3 asked "Have you heard Buck Rogers over the radio...coming on at 7:15 PM and remaining until 7:30 PM? Well, if you have–then hold your breath until you hear THE INTERPLANETARY POLICE! The cartoon strip has been written up into radio-play form."

Right below that blurb is the announcement that "If our tardy readers haven't learned it yet this is to announce that TTT and SFD have combined.

The fourth issue of *Science Fiction Digest* (December, 1932) carried an advertisement which read: "Special Christmas Subscription Offer!"... "Will Positively not be repeated, so take advantage of it NOW! 1 year of Science Fiction Digest and 1 year of Science Fiction for only TWO dollars. YOU WILL BE SAVING FIFTY CENTS if you take advantage of this Special Offer in addition to receiving a fine Fantasy Story magazine, SCIENCE FICTION, and the only fan magazine in the S. F field, the SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST for a whole year, so clip the coupon below and mail it with the money to Science Fiction Digest Company, 117-26 134 Street, South Ozone Park, New York."

These teenage fans were actively co-promoting their fanzines together. Science fiction fandom was still fairly minuscule. Despite a valiant effort to co-promote, *Science Fiction Digest*'s circulation continued to climb whereas *Science Fiction*'s remained moribund. Clearly, the superior printing provided by Connie Ruppert gave *SFD* an edge. People could easily read *Science Fiction Digest*.

In the fourth issue of *Science Fiction Digest* Ray Palmer writes: "SCIENCE FICTION, edited by Jerome Siegel, has gone through its first two issues and heads its editorial policy with a prophecy. Although the magazine is mimeographed at present, we believe Shuster to be another Paul. His mechanical depiction is especially good. The prophecy says it won't be mimeographed long, and it won't be long before it improves vastly. The stories are up to average also, but necessarily short due to the size of the magazine."

The second news blurb (in Mort Weisinger's "The Ether Vibrates") wasn't as kind: "Jerome Siegel, editor of SCIENCE FICTION (mimeographed) whose cartoon strip, 'INTERPLANETARY POLICE' was

rejected faster than light by the newspaper syndicates, masquerades under the name HUGH LANGLEY."

Joe Shuster continued his homegrown art training to the point that Julius Schwartz was able to announce to scientifiction fandom (in his "The Science Fiction Eye" in the January, 1933 issue of *Science Fiction Digest*) that "Joe Shuster, SCIENCE FICTION'S art editor, won first prize in an all-city contest for the best poster used in advertising the Charity Football game."

The fourth issue of *Science Fiction* (February, 1933) carried a detailed half-page ad for its New York counterpart which exhorted the reader to continue to send money to the South Ozone Park address in New York. There is also a full-page review of King Kong as a brand-new movie and a page urging the reader to attend the up-coming 1933 Chicago World's Fair, opening June 1st of that year.

In addition it carried the first installment of a two-part story by Raymond A. Palmer titled "Dimension Doom" with imaginative title-page artwork by Shuster. The printing, however, remained poor. Subscribers complained they couldn't read it very well.

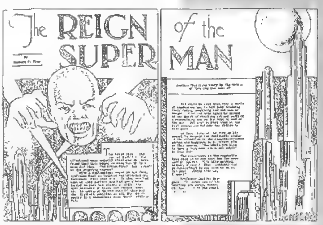
By the time the fifth and last issue came out (sometime before May, 1933), Jerry and Joe had already hooked up for a short while with the editor of the Humor Publishing Company, following a meeting held in Cleveland. For a few short months there, they thought they were going to have a nationally-distributed original-contents comic book like *Detective Dan* and *The Adventures of Detective Ace King*, featuring their revamped hero from *Science Fiction* #3, The Superman, going so far as to create an entire issue including at least two possible covers. The project was never realized.

The Comic Book Connection

Jerry and Joe were moving more and more into the mindset of comic book creation. Jerry said in a 1984 interview: "When Joe and I met, I got interested in the comics and forgot about everything else...there (are) several (comic) books the historians probably aren't even aware of. The Greater Buffalo Press reprinted some British comics. They were called *Comic Cuts* and *Funny Wonder*. Joe and I drew up some material and sent it in to them. We never heard from them and we never got the material back. Then Dell did a weekly, *The Funnies*, in 1929-1930... But what really got Joe and me interested in getting into the field was a comic book called *Detective Dan*. It was published in Chicago, and, when the publisher visited Cleveland, Joe and I met with him and he was interested in a thing we had called "The Superman." But I guess sales on *Detective Dan* were not good enough and it ended right there!"

With the August, 1933 issue of *Science Fiction Digest*, Julius Schwartz announced in his column ("The Science Fiction Eye"), that there were: "Radical Changes for *Science Fiction*."

"According to a communication received from Jerome Siegel, editor of Science Fiction. I am informed that henceforth the magazine will be printed, and that it will be edited by Bernard J. Kenton. This new group will issue a mail-order magazine, containing about 50 pages and costing 20 cents. There will be no cuts at first, but as soon as the magazine gets a good start it will be illustrated by Clay Ferguson, Jr. and Joe Shuster Siegel claims he quit the staff because he is working on a scientifiction strip which a number of syndicates are interested in handling, one editor going so far as to state that it interested and intrigued him. The strip is titled "Rex Carson" and the artist is supposed to be a top-notcher in his field, and "is very experienced at doing scientific illustrations." For decades many believed the "top-nocher in his field" was actually Joe Shuster... it was not! Neither was it Wesso, Paul, Morey, Marchioni, or Ferguson. But there can be no doubt that Joe Shuster and Clay Ferguson were the first two artists in science fiction fandom!



The third issue of Jerry and Joe's fanzine, Science Fiction (Jan 1933), features the first published appearance of their Superman concept.

The "top-nocher" that Jerry Siegel was alluding to was J. Allen St. John, the famous artist who did the covers and interior plates for the Tarzan and John Carter of Mars hardbacks published by McLurg. Jerry confirmed this in an early 1980's interview: "Around this time I contacted J. Allen St. John, who had done all the illustrations for the Tarzan books; and I worked up with him something called Rex

Science Fiction No. 1

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Reign of the Superman

The November 1932 issue of Science Fiction Digest had this filler news item: "SCIENCE FICTION will appear for the third issue in a smaller size, better-grade paper, stiff cover, pictures on almost every page, double-page illustrations and start its new feature QUEERIOUSITIES. The stories will be "Reign of the Superman" by Herbert S. Fine, "Invaders from Pluto" by Bernard J. Kenton." The third issue's "The Reign of the Superman" featured exquisite fan artistry by Joseph Shuster–considering he was working on a mimeo master. This earliest known incarnation of Superman is a story with Superman as an evil scientist. Forrest Ackerman was a character's name to lend it fannish flair. And another short story, "Vandals from Pluto", is by Jerry operating again as Bernard J. Kenton. This issue had a letter of comment from Julius Schwartz in "Editor's Televisor": (*see following page*)

Schwartz' letter to Jerry Siegel

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Dear Editor,

Just received the second issue of S-F and thought I'd write a few words on how the issue impressed me.

I haven't read any of the stories except Ackerman's SUPER-SCIENTIFIC SATIRE. Although the author is a good friend of mine, I cannot help but say that I think he's a little ostentatious when he tells in a disguised manner of an editor's inquietude until he receives Ackerman's letter favorably commenting on the extraordinary issue. Instead of using Ackerman he could have just have well used Allen Glasser, Black Darrow, Michael Fogaris-Me-Not, Lesstimor Wois-Ink-Hor or any other well-known SF fans.

I wish you would print the mag on smaller paper. It's very difficult to read in its present form, especially after a rough journey through the mails.

Of course, I intend to stick with you until and after you get the 1,000 circulation hoped for. I'm anxious to see more of Artist Shuster's work, and some more pages and stories per issue.

I hope you decided to print this letter for if anyone reads this who is willing to sell the first issue of S-F, I would like to hear from him.

Sincerely yours,
Julius Schwartz

(Thank you for your kind wishes, Mr. Schwartz. You will see that your suggestion of a smaller size paper has been carried forth. We had intended more numerous and radical changes but last-minute figuring and economy, forced us not to.—Ed.)

A couple of SF's finest writers, Jack Williamson and Edmond Hamilton (above), in a 1937 photo. They were close friends as well as cosmic creators.

Carson of the Ether Patrol. His drawings were very nice. It was submitted around, nothing happened to it, and eventually it just got lost over the years."

The pain of the Humor Publishing rejection must have been intense for Jerry to substitute his nom de plume from *Science Fiction* as the "new" editor in an effort to relaunch his beloved fanzine. It would prove to be the first of many such heartbreaks as the reality of business began to sink in. After the initial Humor Publishing fiasco, one of two things must have happened. Either Jerry–who desperately wanted to become known as a famous creator of fantasy–approached St. John on his own, or, after Joe Shuster, in a fit of depression, tore up the story art to the earliest-known incarnation of The Superman as a comic strip or comic book (leaving us only the two covers which fortunately still exist today). Jerry felt compelled to contact other artists until Joe got over it.

In mid 1934, Jerry contacted Cleveland resident Mel Graff, who had been doing Phantom Detective covers and interiors for Standard. That was one of the titles Jack Schiff and Mort Weisinger edited, and for which Whitney Ellsworth wrote. Beginning in March of 1934, Mel Graff began a daily strip called "The Adventures of Patsy," an on-going fairy tale replete with witches and goblins. Soon thereafter Jerry made contact with Graff, inquiring whether the artist would be interested in collaborating on a strip called "The Superman." Graff dismissed the Siegel-suggested concept. However, that summer, a character called The Phantom Magician debuted in "Patsy." He could fly through the air and sported a cape and a chest emblem. The Phantom Magician had key ingredients that we would later identify in Superman. It is possible that Graff borrowed these elements from Jerry Siegel. Amazingly, the Phantom Magician later lost his powers.

The April 1933 issue of *Fortune* magazine carried a very long, full-color article about how many millions of dollars the syndicators, publishers, advertisers, and creators were raking in from newspaper comic strips. Jerry once said, "...when I first met Joe, to my intense delight...he was collecting...the early Tarzan pages by Hal Foster..." There was big money in landing a newspaper comic strip contract. Many creators were pulling down in excess of a grand a week, phenomenal money in those days!

In the early years of the Great Depression, which had begun in 1929, doing a popular comic strip was a way out of the rampant poverty. Connie Ruppert, the printer of SF fandom's finest projects, told the author at Archcon XIX: "I had been a fan of Barney Google, Popeye, Foster's Tarzan and later Prince Valiant, and other legends of the comic world." Conrad Ruppert collaborated with artist Clay Ferguson on a proposed science fiction comic strip they tried to sell. Ruppert never mentioned the idea to Julie or Mort because so much was going on with *Science Fiction Digest*.

In 1934, Ruppert had an idea about doing a comic strip about a super being and approached artist Clay Ferguson. The premise of this character was described accordingly: "There was a young man from another solar system who fell in love with a princess of a planet. The king, who was opposed to the relationship because the man was a commoner, ordered his capture. He decided that the man's punishment would be to be made immortal.

"The man and the princess were banished to the outermost planet in this solar system, where they lived until his wife and children died. Then, he left in the space ship which had originally delivered them to this planet. Over time, he gained extraordinary strength and other exceptional mental and physical powers. He traveled from planet to planet, doing good and gaining powers. Eventually, at one planet, he learned how to project his body from the space ship to the planet, like John Carter."

Ruppert and Ferguson prepared some strips, and Ruppert contacted quite a few syndicates. There were no responses to Ruppert's letters and they couldn't find a publisher. After a while they just dropped the idea. After many housing moves, the strips were lost.

Jerry was known to have written many dozens of letters to his favorite writers and artists. I talked with Jack Williamson in October, 1995 during Archcon XX, and he told me that Jerry was the one who introduced him via correspondence to Edmond Hamilton (later, a long time Superman writer). According to Moskowitz in *Seekers of Tomorrow*, the two sci-fi writers "had in common the fact that (they were) inspired to write by reading A. Merritt. Eventually, Hamilton and Williamson decided to sail down the full length of the Mississippi in the manner of Huckleberry Finn, agreeing to meet in Minneapolis the first week of June, 1931, to begin the trip." It was one of many adventures in their life-long friendship.

At first, Jerry had written the inhabitants of Krypton as two-dimensional geometric shapes. In 1934, Jack Williamson told Jerry to make the Kryptonians human beings. Jack recently said that he wrote to Jerry back then, warning: "Otherwise, you will lose your audience. Readers identify with fellow humans."

In 1929, Jack Williamson (Portales, New Mexico) collaborated with Dr. Miles Breuer (Lincoln, Nebraska) on a story sold to and published by Gernsback called "The Girl From Mars." It features plot elements that include a scientist who sends a rocket from a doomed planet to Earth. This story made its first appearance as the opening number of a "direct sales" mail-order series of pamphlets. It should also be noted here that Jack Williamson is the longest-lived, continuously active author in the United States today. He was also involved in the embryonic stages of Superman as was Edmond Hamilton. Regular correspondence flowed between all three.

In fact, Jerry did an abbreviated mimeographed version of Hamilton's 1926 *Weird Tales* story, "The Metal Giants," for the Swanson Book Company of Washburn, North Dakota. The company gave it away as a premium to all who made purchases of Swanson's mail-order science fiction.

In the October/November, 1934 issue of *Fantasy Magazine* Julius Schwartz tersely reported the following in his "Science Fiction Eye" column: "After having accepted Jerome Siegel and Joe Shuster's cartoon adaptation of Raymond A Palmer's 'Whispering Space,' WONDER STORIES suddenly decided not to use it because it's 'mechanically inadvisable.'"

This issue of **Wonder Stories features yarns by Ed Hamilton and Jack Williamson.**

Close-up of a Gernsback ad showing the first of a series of SF pamphlets (1929-1930) that printed original stories that could only be purchased via mail order. "The Girl From Mars" by Jack Williamson and Miles J. Breuer contains the concept of an infant sent to Earth from another planet by rocket ship – where she grows up with "super" powers.

The DC Connection

Following a review of the evidence accumulated over a long period of time, I now believe that it was during this crucial time span that Jerry and Joe (back together!) got serious about just how and what Superman was going to be. *Famous Funnies* was beginning to establish a reliable track record and *New Fun* #1 was just around the corner (soon to be produced by the pioneering comic book company which former pulp writer turned comic book publisher Major Malcom Wheeler-Nicholson had begun). The first issue of *New Fun* was tabloid size and dated February, 1935. Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster were a couple of the very first contributors.

Joe was so poor by the time they made their first sales that: "When I had no paper, sometimes I would use brown wrapping paper. I remember I once found several rolls of wallpaper. I was overjoyed. The back was white and I had enough drawing paper to supply me for a long time. We submitted two strips to Major Wheeler-Nicholson, "Henri Duval" and "Dr. Occult;" one was done on brown paper, and one on the back of wallpaper. And DC approved them, just like that! It's incredible! But DC did say, 'We like your ideas, we like your scripts and we like your drawings. But please, copy over the stories in pen and ink on good paper.' So I got my mother and father to lend me the money to buy some decent paper–the first drawing paper I ever had–in order to submit those stories properly to DC Comics."

In fact, with these initial sales to National Allied publishing (later DC), distinct aspects of what became the first published incarnations of the Superman mythos began appearing soon in their first episodes of Dr. Occult in *New Fun* #6 (October, 1935) through *More Fun* #13 (September, 1936).

Somewhere in 1935 Joe's artwork dramatically improved when a "Mr. Joseph Shuster" answered a newspaper ad from Joanne Carter... the future Mrs. Jerry Siegel! Joanne remembers:

"I put an ad in the Cleveland Plain Dealer in the Situation Wanted column, advertising myself as a model, and Joe happened to see it. We corresponded, and he signed all his letters 'Mr. Joseph Shuster' so I thought he was an older man...I was so nervous, because I thought he was going to say I was too young.

"...I said, "I'm the model that Mr. Shuster was expecting." He said, "Come on in," and we got to talking...right away we got excited, we were talking about not only the weather but movies and everything. Finally I said, "Does Mr. Shuster know that I'm here?" And he said, "I'm Mr. Shuster."

"We went in the back and I posed for him that day; I posed for him every Saturday after that. When I came out to the living room...Jerry was waiting to meet me, because he knew I was going to be coming. I was absolutely astounded with his energy–talk about super-energy!... We three had an instant rapport. Joe was very shy and quiet. Jerry was very outgoing. Eventually we became the 'three musketeers' and stuck together through good times and bad. We were together before 'Superman' was sold.

"My ambition was to be a newspaper reporter... But I'll settle for being the most famous girl reporter in the world–Lois Lane."

It was during this time period that Julie and Mort "decided to go into the science fiction agenting business." Julie said, "We started a company called Solar Sales Service. We were young and naive in 1935–I was still in college- and sent out letters to all the writers we knew, offering to handle their work."

Dated December, 1935, *New Comics* #1 was introduced as the Major's first newsstand comic book. *New Fun* underwent a name and size format change to *More Fun* to match *New Comics*. On page one is a message from the editors that Jerry and Joe obviously took to heart:

"...Here is a magazine of picturized stories chock-full of laughter and thrills, comic characters of every hue, knights and Vikings on ancient days, adventuring heroes, detectives, aviator daredevils of today and hero supermen of days to come!..."

With *New Comics* #2 (January, 1936) Jerry and Joe introduced the Federal Men. Shuster quickly expanded from the small confines of the panel borders to viewing the entire page as one large drawing to bring into collective balance.

With *The Comics Magazine* #1 (May, 1936) and *More Fun* #14 (October, 1936) thru #17 (January, 1937) Jerry and Joe's character of Dr. Occult became a near-perfect image of

Cosmic Columns

BY JOHN L. COKER III

The columns which Julius Schwartz and Mort Weisinger produced in the early science fiction fan magazines were sources for fans to obtain accurate and timely information about what was happening in the field. Julie and Mort were enthusiastic sleuths who tracked down rumors, compiled lists, and scooped the larger professional magazines with news items which they gathered in correspondence and travels. The Time Traveller featured "Titans of Science Fiction" in which Julie profiled many of the authors, artists, and editors of the day. Mort serialized "The History of Science Fiction", and Julie published a complete list of all the books containing Science Fiction elements in "The Service Department". They both responded to fan inquiries in "Science Fiction Question and Answers."

"The Science Fiction Eye" was a market report that appeared in Science Fiction Digest and Fantasy Magazine, providing late-breaking news on forthcoming stories, new ventures, radio adaptations, and items of interest about the writers and artists. In "Science Fiction Scrapbook" Julie reprinted reviews of the Science Fiction books which had appeared in mainstream newspapers, such as The New York Times. This helped to influence the readers' perception that Science Fiction was becoming legitimate. Julie and Mort also wrote "Weird Whisperings", a monthly column for Charles D. Hornig's The Fantasy Fan, in which they reported news for the fans of Fantasy and Horror.

Three giants reminisce about the future at Archcon XIX: Jack Williamson–author of many memorable SF stories and novels–at left, the late Sam Moskowitz–SF historian and anthologist–center, and Julie Schwartz–the only "living legend" of both the SF and comics worlds.

Superman. During those few months, Dr. Occult flew with a cape on his new uniform that also sported a distinctive emblem on his chest.

The same month *More Fun* #17 came out, *New Adventure* #12 gave us Siegel and Shuster's futuristic "Federal Men of Tomorrow" with its main hero named "Jor-L, ace sleuth of the service. . . ."

Slam Bradley began in *Detective Comics* #1 (March, 1937). Slam was a ringer for Superman. Siegel remembered that Slam Bradley had "some of the impact we planned to use later in Superman."

(Another great infusion of SF into Jerry and Joe's "straight" strips is the two-part Slam Bradley time travel story in *Detective* #23 and #24 which has Slam and Shorty travel with Professor Kenton to the year 2 Billion A.D., where Plant People, Bird Men, and Rocket Cars are among the rococo elements of 1930's SF crammed into this classic. Shorty even dies in part one but gets better in part two.) And Jerry and Joe's Spy strip (which also ran in *Detective*) featured a relationship between lead characters Bart and Sally that anticipates some of the Clark Kent and Lois Lane dynamics.

In 1938 Shelly Mayer, "boy editor" at All American Comics, talked his boss, Max Gaines, into showing Editor Vincent Sullivan the strips that ended up being the Superman story in *Action Comics* #1. Before DC's fourth regular title came out, Jerry and Joe had already hired Paul Cassidy as their first art assistant. Some time later Bill Liebowitz signed a check for the company Harry Donenfeld had recently taken over from Wheeler-Nicholson and bought from Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster the cover, story and concept that has grown to be one of the most widespread cultural icons in the entire world.

Following a successful stint as editor of Standard's *Thrilling Wonder Stories* and other pulps, in 1941 Mort Weisinger went to work with a former writer of his . . . Whitney Ellsworth. Whit had since become the main editor at DC Comics. When Mort went into the Army, he asked his friend and fellow editor from Standard, Jack Schiff, to fill in for him until he got back. For 25 years following the end of World War II in 1945, Mort was the main editor of the Superman titles–overseeing a stable of fellow pulp alumni like Edmond Hamilton and Otto Binder as well as the fellow who created Superman, Jerry Siegel.

The Nebula Connection

When Mort Weisinger resigned to pursue his writing in the summer of 1970, his closest friend and co-creator of the first fanzine took over the helm. Julius Schwartz, who had so carefully planted the seeds of comics fandom, replaced his long-time friend as the editorial steward of the Last Son of Krypton until he in turn retired in 1986, becoming for many years DC's "Ambassador of Good Will" at numerous comic and SF conventions all over the country.

"This should end your piece," Julie said, "This ties in beautifully with Jerry and Jack Williamson."

"You start with the idea that Siegel got in touch with Hamilton and Williamson, Williamson helped Siegel out, and the final pay-off was Williamson's arranging for Jerry and Joe to be awarded a Special Nebula Award for the creation of Superman.

"In 1979 Jack Willimason was President of the Science Fiction Writers of America. As president he took it upon himself to award his long-time friends for a lifetime of achievement in the field of science fiction.

"The SFWA gets together once a year, and they hand out awards. Jerry and Joe were unable to attend. So they asked me to accept the award.

"The plaques each said, 'The Science Fiction Writers of America present this award to Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster–originators of Superman–for creating an American myth.' The two plaques were identical except for one difference. Joe's plaque said to 'Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel,' Jerry's plaque said to 'Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster.'

"When the award was finally presented to Jerry, I found myself asking him, 'How do you feel about the fact that you tried without success all your life to be a science fiction writer, but here you are being honored by the Science Fiction Writers of America as one of them?'

And Jerry smiled, 'That makes me feel like a real Superman.'" ■

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Bruno Premiani Splash
Doom Patrol #101, pg.1

Frank Frazetta illustration from
unpublished EC Picto-Fiction

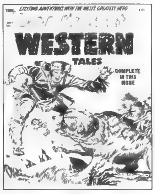
Carmine Infantino Splash
Flash #138, pg. 1

Frank Frazetta illustration from
unpublished EC Picto-Fiction

Gil Kane & Murphy Anderson
Cover, Green Lantern #32

Jack Kirby Splash
Tales Of Suspense #86

Jack Kirby Cover
Fantastic Four Annual #4



Jack Kirby Cover
Western Tales #31

Al Williamson & Reed Crandall
5 pg story, Alarming Tales #2

Berni Wrightson
Eerie #61 (13x18)

Alex Schomburg Cover
All New #11

Frank Frazetta Published
Doubleday Ilustration (14x17)

We will be displaying an extensive selection of works by most of the artists listed below...and many, many more!
We are very interested in comic book art, strip art and illustrative art by: N. Adams, Kirby, Eisner, Ditko, McFarlane, Frazetta, Crandall, Williamson, Schulz, Raymond Foster, Kurtzman, Kubert, Smith, Jones, Wrightson, Jim Lee, Adam Hughes, Herriman, Segar, Rockwell, Kaluta, EC artists, Crumb, Stevens, Fine, Swan, Kane, Toth and everybody else!

CAPTAIN COMET

Continued from page 47

says the no-nonsense Man of Destiny)–until he meets Radea on the diamond-shaped planet Hyperba in the Quadrange FF17. Comet meets his female counterpart, another future mutant with the same abilities as he. Radea wants to end her planet's ritualistic "Sun Games," in which the loser travels to their sun to set off a nuclear weapon to re-energize it. In their battle to do so, "queer (Hyperban) weapons" overcome Comet, who remote-controls the Cometeer over a great distance by telepathy. Radea becomes her planet's ruler, and each is shown to be mightily impressed by the other after Comet heads home. Comet puts her picture in a locket.

"WHEN THE EARTH WAS KIDNAPPED"

(*Strange Adventures* #13, Oct 1951, $51 $153 $410) - Zackro, also an astonomer, notices from his private observatory that the Earth has somehow travelled from our solar system to Alpha Centauri's, where it orbits its blue sun, and the lesser gravity causes humans to shoot up into the air! Comet catches them all, wisely advising them to wear lead boots. The perpetrators turn out to be a race from inside Earth which originated in the Alpha Centauri system; Comet manages to reverse the ray and return Earth to our system safely. (Hopefully, we thanked him.) In a unified DC universe's "reality" context, the entire adventure probably should be written off as Zackro's dream.

"DESTINATION DOOM"

(*Strange Adventures* #14, Nov 1951, $51 $153 $410) - Comet develops Spectrum Drive which enables him to exceed the speed of light and warp space. Telematic force (mind-over-matter) is used by aliens to select Adam Blake as an average-human guinea pig for an alien livestock collection; others include Octro of Venus and Nilor of Saturn. In his battle with them, Comet creates a protective screen of mental energy to ward off "hurtling death projectiles," and shows immunity to electric shock. The aliens turn out to be robots, who fail to use Comet as a template to duplicate humans, and are defeated. Comet takes the others to their home planets.

"CAPTAIN COMET–ENEMY OF EARTH"

(*Strange Adventures* #15, Dec 1951, $51 $153 $410) - Comet's memory is wiped by aliens on a comet, who subsequently convince him to take over the Earth. Revelations: normally, he never requires rest or sleep; his body sets up an immunity to any ray or force that's used on it. Lucy's hair is now brown.

"THE GHOST OF CAPTAIN COMET"

(*SA* #16, Jan 1952, $51 $153 $410) - Comet creates a mental ghost of himself (much like Dr. Strange's astral projections). In that state he can telepathically communicate. A being from an alternate Earth appears on Comet's Earth in phantom form, following a hydrogen-bomb explosion. Lucy Torrence named… she's blond. Pineville is mentioned.

"BEWARE THE SYNTHETIC MEN"

(*SA* #17, Feb 1952, $51 $153 $410) - Synthetic green men made of neoplasm invade; Comet turns them into statues of marble in the town of Calnit, near Salt Lake, where you can find the statues on display today, if you're lucky. Comet reads minds over TV since thought waves are broadcast along the same lines as the sound and picture, though significantly weaker.

"THE WORLD OF FLYING MEN"

(*SA* #18, Mar 1952, $51 $153 $410) - Fifteen years before, Zackro's old-friend Dr. Harkovy and his family left for Mars; his daughter, the only survivor of the flight, now lives on the asteroid Thule as the princess Doriana, daughter of King Afthors. Comet and Zackro bring her home to Earth.

"SECRET OF THE TWELVE ETERNALS"

(*SA*#19, Apr 1952, $51 $153 $410) - Zus, Merkry, Hurkles, Demeter, Dionisius, Orphees and six other aliens are the gods of ancient myth, searching for immortality as they ride their ship through space. They don't succeed; all are dead by story's end. Comet revisits the planet Aglaron, which he'd been to several times before.

"SLAVES OF THE SEA-MASTER"

SA#20 (May 1952, $51 $153 $410) - Captain Comet visits Atlantis where he defeats its ancient ruler, who dies when Comet raises Atlantis to the surface (it sinks again). Comet withstands pressure at ocean's bottom easily; Lucy's hair is light brown.

"EYES OF OTHER WORLDS"

SA#21 (Jun 1952, $40 $120 $325) - Invaders from the asteroid Eros; all are killed by fire at the end. Comet's body resists their ray-blasts.

"THE GUARDIANS OF THE CLOCKWORK UNIVERSE"

SA#22 (Jul 1952, $40 $120 $325) - The origin of the orange-skinned Guardians; their planet is a tiny world shining by an unearthly, sunless light; Comet enters their world through a giant clock. The Guardians have long white hair and wear bands around their heads. They are charged with seeing that the universe's mechanism doesn't stop running by protecting civilizations and physical changes that threaten its continuance; they are super-astronomers. Nestro, the chief Guardian, tells Comet, "We are not men of action. Always in past emergencies we have found someone like yourself–with great powers and a hatred of evil–to serve us!" Comet's old friend Radea was contacted first and they go to the planet Lukan in Galaxy XII (only a few hours away by Spectrum-Drive), where Comet adjusts to the cold by upping his body temperature to 160 degrees. He battles the bad guys with mind blasts, killing them by vibrating their crystal bodies to pieces. Radea promises to see him again. Lucy is back to being a blonde.

"THE BRAIN-PIRATES OF PLANET X"

SA#23 (Aug 1952, $40 $120 $325) - Visiting the long-closed (due to bad roads) Midwest National Park, Comet comes upon a guy he suspects is up to no good. When he reads his mind, he prefaces it with, "I ordinarily don't do this, but...," indicating his code of privacy when using his telepathy. Planet X text books have references to planets Eros and Sirius (from prior CC stories) as being dead worlds. Comet's tireless body is referred to.

"DOOMSDAY ON EARTH"

SA#24 (Sep 1952, $40 $120 $325) - A giant brain inside Earth is causing earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. The brain dies from a bullet fired by Comet, though not from his ray pistol. Comet's body is said to be able to last a long time without air. Lucy has black hair!

"THE DAY THAT VANISHED"

SA#25 (Oct 1952, $40 $120 $325) - Aliens from planet Cathor put everyone except Comet to sleep.

Comet has a workshop behind Prof. Zackro's house; it features a spaceship detector. Lucy still has black hair.

"CAPTAIN COMET VS. MISS UNIVERSE"

SA#26 (Nov 1952, $40 $120 $325) - A stellar radio beam crosses space; Prof. Zackro uses his Time Hook invention to bring Miss Universe to the present to compete with Captain Comet at saving the world. She turns out to be not only from a completely alien world in Earth's spacial position 100,000 years from now–despite her quite attractive human appearance, she's actually plantlife.

"THE COUNTERFEIT CAPTAIN COMET"

SA#27 (Dec 1952, $40 $120 $325) - An alien named Zdrin creates an evil double of CC. Zackro gasses him with an odorless gas which has no effect. Comet nonetheless wards off the invasion, the aliens not wanting to mess with a planet boasting such a powerful defender as he. Comet jokes about being able to read Zackro's mind.

"DEVIL'S ISLAND IN SPACE"

SA#28 (Jan 1953, $40 $120 $325) - The Septarch, rulers of the planet Lamia, exile their criminals to Earth, where the scamps steal an H-Bomb. Comet paralyzes them with mental beams.

"THE TIME CAPSULES FROM 1,000,000 B.C."

SA#29 (Feb 1953, $40 $120 $325) - Robots powered by cosmic rays try to conquer the world by increasing the radiation; Comet doesn't let 'em. "His skin can hardly be bruised or cut," Zackro observes.

"MENACE FROM THE WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE"

SA#30 (Mar 1953, $40 $120 $325) - Aliens try to drive Comet insane by making fairy-tale creatures appear to only him. He is invulnerable to fire because he can "adapt to it." Finally, he uses his "Paralo-Gun" sidearm. "Captain Comet Saves Earth" headline appears on newspapers.

"LIGHTS, CAMERA–INVASION"

SA#31 (Apr 1953, $40 $120 $290) - In the fictional TV show INVADERS FROM MARS, real aliens capture Comet, but he beats them, as usual. Gas knocks Comet out because he wasn't defending himself against it. A blonde Lucy observes about Adam "how much of a remarkable resemblance he bears to Captain Comet."

"THE CHALLENGE OF MAN-APE THE MIGHTY"

SA#32 (May 1953, $40 $120 $300) - Prof. Sarcon discovers in Africa, a race of apes with human intelligence, actually superior to man. The malevolent Super-Ape switches bodies with Captain Comet and kills Sarcon. Comet is hunted down in Midwest City as the gorilla, but manages to build a machine which switches them back to where they were. Super-Ape is placed in the Midwest City Zoo.

"THE HUMAN BEEHIVE"

SA#33 (Jun 1953, $40 $120 $300) - Adam, on leave from the library, is a recorder on a South Pacific expedition. Dr. Eric Johnson evolves giant bees, shrinks other animals and humans on the island. When he dies at the end, his Reducto-Ray goes with him. Was Comet saved by giant bees? Lucy's hair is strawberry blonde now.

"THE LADY OR THE TIGER-MAN"

SA#34 (Jul 1953, $40 $120 $290) - In an adventure Comet telepaths to Zackro in seconds, Comet saves a world from the Mind Dictator. Initially assuming the dictator to be Esklon, it turns out instead to be the Tiger-Man, who dies. Esklon is a good guy, and his sister Rana stows away on the Cometeer and returns to Earth with Comet. She becomes an assistant at the library.

"THE COSMIC CHESSBOARD"

SA#35 (Aug 1953, $40 $120 $290) - Nestro, the chief Guardian of the Universe, contacts Comet again, sending him to compete in an Interplanetary Chess Tournament to save the solar system (á la JLA *SA*#1). Aliens include Alavan of Mars, Xtanl of Venus, Pygr-Gar of Pluto. Comet is overcome by Kniton nerve gas, which he detects too late. The Cometeer's viewing screen is called the Visi-Plate. The strawberry blonde Lucy distracts Adam's chess game!

"THE GRAB-BAG PLANET"

SA#36 (Sep 1953, $40 $120 $290) - Residents of the planet Crossur have a pesky scavenger hunt, which Comet breaks up. Lucy is blonde again.

"THE INVADERS FROM THE GOLDEN ATOM"

SA#37 (Oct 1953, $40 $120 $290) - Lucy is directed by something inside her ring to build a machine. Comet turns a dial on it and loses invaders from the Golden Atom, whom he dispatches by building a counter-shrinkray and then following them to their world where his breaths poisons in their atmosphere! When he returns, Lucy throws the ring into the ocean. "Maybe some day I--er--a lucky man will place another one on your marriage finger," Comet tells her. Comet's new costume has no harness straps.

"THE SEEING-EYE HUMANS"

SA#38 (Nov 1953, $40 $120 $290) - A race from the planet Renya is going blind and captures all the best-sighted people on Earth to act as their guide-dogs. Comet defeats them.

"THE GUILTY GORILLA"

SA#39 (Dec 1953, $44 $132 $350) - Super-Ape goes on trial for the murder of Prof. Sarcon, but telepathically forces the judge to clear the court and makes his escape. He joins with local crooks and begins a crime-wave which Comet stops by overcoming the ape in a wrestling match. Ends with Super-Ape in jail about to be retried.

"THE MIND MONSTER"

SA#40 (Jan 1954, $38 $114 $265) - Radiation from a supernova evolves a spider into a woman with a super-brain. Comet is similarly affected but changes back to normal through sheer willpower, then uses a polarized film strip to devolve the woman into her arachnid form.

"THE BEAST FROM OUT OF TIME"

SA#41 (Feb 1954, $38 $114 $265) - Physicist Jeris Bartlett builds a time machine in his sleep while his daughter Linda takes notes. Bartlett winds up trapped in the future, and Comet uses the notes to build another machine to follow him, first going into the past by mistake. Turns out that the Bartletts are from 50,000 AD to begin with, but the machine has a defect which causes users to lose all memory of their own era after one hour...making it useless to Comet for any further travel.

"THE PLANET OF ANCIENT CHILDREN"

SA#42 (Mar 1954, $38 $114 $265) - On his first interstellar trip, Comet is forced to go to the planet Glete and meet Tandar, the Supreme Councilor--a grown-up child on a planet where people age backwards. Tandar wants Comet to protect them from Frall, the big yellow monster Frall is due to return every century. Comet slays it

with a spear "I seldom use my ability to control matter at a distance." Doesn't tell the Gleteans Earth's location, fearing invasion.

"THE PHANTOM PRIZE FIGHTER"

SA#43 (Apr 1954, $38 $114 $265) - "As you know Professor, the power is not constant. It's at its greatest strength after a rigorous "training" period." A lethal ray only diffuses his atoms enough to make him immaterial during a boxing exhibition; the alien who did it is taken into custody by him.

"THE PLANET THAT PLOTTED MURDER"

SA#44 (May 1954, $38 $114 $265) - A race of plant-men come to Earth and disguise themselves as trees and plants. Comet battles them to a standstill– and the leader is killed by a falling tree. Ironic, eh?

"INTERPLANETARY WAR BASE"

SA#46 (Jul 1954, $38 $114 $265) - Good ol' Captain Comet saves Earth by making the aliens think that everyone's as evolved as he is. The invasion is unique: a big black bubble covers the area, which stops both clocks and light. Again, Comet employs his "seldom-used power of mind-over-matter."

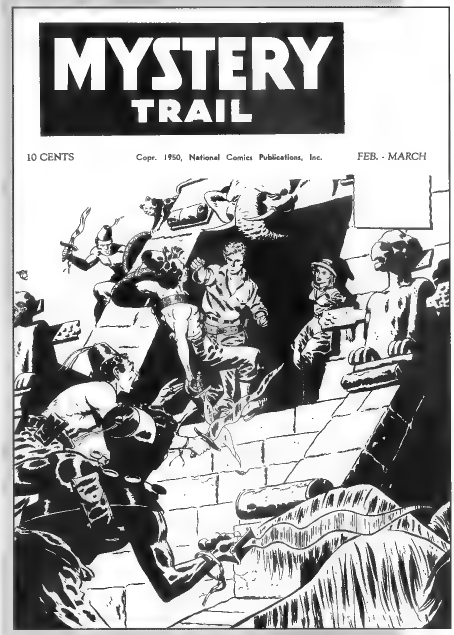
"THE REVOLT OF THE THINKING MACHINE"

SA#49 (Oct 1954, $38 $114 $265) - October, 1954. A computer goes wild and begins building a cobalt bomb–to ward off an alien invasion. Comet figures out the aliens are soluble in water, and floods them back home. "Great Ganymede!" exclaims Zackro. The final adventure. Captain Comet isn't seen again in the pre-Code era, and when he pops up on Earth-One over two decades later, his parents wouldn't even recognize him...

COMET COVER ART!

Cover Artists on Strange Adventures with Captain Comet Covers (Pencils/Inks)

SA #9 Carmine Infantino/Bernard Sachs; #10 Bob Oskner (Toth?)/Bernard Sachs; #11 Bob Oskner/Bernard Sachs; #12-14 Gil Kane/Gil Kane; #17 Gil Kane/Gil Kane; #18 Murphy Anderson/Murphy Anderson; #19 Murphy Anderson/Murphy Anderson; #24 Murphy Anderson/Sy Barry; #26 Ruben Moreira/Ruben Moreira; #27 Murphy Anderson/Murphy Anderson; #32-44 Murphy Anderson/Murphy Anderson. ■



CBM Exclusive!
Solved... The Mystery of Mystery Trail!

As an avid collector of Ashcans, I recently came across an item that ye editor referenced in a recent issue of *CBM*. Yes, DC did intend to add a companion title to *Danger Trail* and *Romance Trail*... and here is the Ashcan to prove it (note that DC used cover art from *Danger Trail* #3). Hope this resolves the long standing *Mystery Trail* question.

–Gary Colabuono, Chicago

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#1 (Oct/Nov 1969, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - The Turtle-Men of Space! (*SA* #118, Jul 1960); The Unknown Spaceman! (*MIS* #11, Dec/Jan 1953); Star Actor of the Spaceways! (*SA* #122, Nov 1960).

#2 (Dec 1969/Jan 1970, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - Parade of the Planets! (*MIS* #52, Jun 1959); Murphy Anderson bio text, not a reprint; Giants of the Cosmic Ray! (*SA* #82, Jul 1957); The Brain-Masters of Polaris (*SA* #12, Sep 1951).

#3 (Feb/Mar 1970, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - When Earth Turned Into A Comet! (*SA* #150, Mar 1963); Prisoner of the Electric Eye (*MIS* #53, Aug 1959); Space Hermit (*SA* #34, Jul 1953); Escape From Earth! (*MIS* #61, Aug 1960).

#4 (Apr/May 1970, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - Riddle of the Vanishing Earthmen! (*MIS* #32, Jun/Jul 1956); Our Home is in the Stars! (*MIS* #65, Feb 1961); The Surprise Package Planet! (*MIS* #47, Oct 1958).

#5 (Jun/Jul 1970, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - Gorilla Who Challenged the World! (*SA* #55, Apr 1955); Jungle Imperior! (*SA* #56, May 1955); Watch-Dogs of the Universe! (*SA* #62, Nov 1955); Anti-Invasion Machine! (*SA* #80, May 1957).

#6 (Aug/Sep 1970, 15¢, 32 pgs.) - The Amazing Human Race! (*SA* #85, Oct 1957); The Runaway Space-Train! (*MIS* #50, Mar 1959); The Magic Lamp from Space! (*MIS* #62, Sep 1960).

#7 (Oct/Nov 1970, 25¢, 64 pgs.) - Earth Shall Not Die! (New Material); The Menace of Saturn's Rings! (*SA* #96, Sep 1958); Next Year--Andromeda! (*MIS* #85, Aug 1963); Do Not Open Till Doomsday! (*SA* #36, Sep 1953); World at the Edge of the Universe! (*SA* #60, Sep 1955); The Twice-Told Tale! (*SA* #27, Dec 1952); The Giant From Beyond! (*SA* #101, Feb 1959).

#8 (Dec 1970/Jan 1971, 25¢, 64 pgs.) - Station MARS On The Air! (*MIS* #25, Apr/May 1955); Riddle of the Counterfeit Earthmen! (*MIS* #54, Sep 1959); Across The Ages! (*SA* #60, Sep 1955); The Dreams Of Doom! (*SA* #132, Sep 1961); Earth Shall Not Die! (New Material); The Incredible Eyes of Arthur Gaill (*SA* #77, Feb 1957); Meet Your Masters--the Ants! (*SA* #23, Aug 1952).

#9 (Feb/Mar 1971, 25¢, 64 pgs.) - The Man Who Moved The World! (*MIS* #34, Oct/Nov 1956); Riddle of Asteroid 8794! (*MIS* #50, Mar 1959); Two-Way Time-Traveler! (*SA* #143, Aug 1962); Man Who Aged Backwards! (*SA* #96, Sep 1958); Last Horse On Earth! (*SA* #108, Sep 1959); The Sky-High Man! (*MIS* #49, Feb 1959); Doom-Trap For Earth! (*MIS* #72, Dec 1961).

#10 (Apr/May 1971, 25¢, 64 pgs.) - The Fish-Men Of Earth! (*SA* #56, Sep 1955); The Devil's Island of Space! (*MIS* #46, Sep 1958); The Most Dangerous Man On Earth! (*SA* #129, Jun 1961); Destination-Star (*MIS* #14, Jun/Jul 1953); Tomorrow's Hero! (*SA* #112, Jan 1960); 24,000-Hour Day! (*MIS* #49, Feb 1959); The Answer Man Of Space (*MIS* #73, Feb 1962).

#11 (Jun/Jul 1971, 25¢, 64 pgs.) - Invaders from the Space-SatelRites! (*MIS* #43, Apr/May 1958); It's a Woman's World! (*MIS* #8, Jun/Jul 1952); Billion-Year Evolution! (*MIS* #70, Sep 1961); Warning from One Million B.C.! (*SA* #109, Oct 1959); "Terra" of the Spaceways! (*MIS* #59, May 1960); Man Who Ate Sunshine! (*SA* #71, Aug 1956); 60 Million-Mile Long Weapon! (*SA* #131, Aug 1961).

#12 (Aug/Sep, 25¢, 48 pgs.) - Dawn-World Menace! (*SA* #147, Dec 1962); Mystery Of The Runaway Meteor! (*MIS* #27, Aug/Sep 1955); Earth For Sale! (*SA* #89, Feb 1958); Sign Language Of Space! (*SA* #63, Dec 1955); Gateways To The Stars! (*MIS* #78, Sep 1962).

#13 (Oct/Nov 1971, 25¢, 48 pgs.) - Earth's Friendly Invaders! (*SA* #154, Jul 1963); Yes Virginia--There's a Martian! (*SA* #159, Dec 1963); Quest of the Star-Flowers! (*MIS* #63, Nov 1960); Monster That Fished for Men! (*SA* #21, Jun 1952); Phantom Spaceman! (*MIS* #79, Nov 1962).

#14 (Dec 1971/Jan 1972, 25¢, 48 pgs.) - Human Pet of Gorilla Land! (*SA* #108, Sep 1959); Planet Nobody Wanted! (*MIS* #13, Apr/May 1953); Raiders of the Waterless World! (*MIS* #56, Dec 1959); Secret of the Dinosaur Skeleton! (*SA* #138, Mar 1962); I Delivered Mail from Mars! (*SA* #42, Mar 1954).

#15 (Feb/Mar 1972, 25¢, 52 pgs.) - World At My Doorstep! (*SA* #95, Aug 1958); Menace of the Shrinking Bomb! (*SA* #113, Feb 1960); Interplanetary Merry-Go-Round (*MIS* #21, Aug/Sep 1954); Invisible Dinosaur! (*SA* #133, Oct 1961); Captain Baboon's Space-War! (*MIS* #68, Jun 1961)

#16 (Apr/May 1972, 25¢, 52 pgs.) - World Wrecker (*SA* #50, Nov 1954); Doom from Station X! (*MIS* #15, Aug/Sep 1953); 1000-Year-Old Man! (*SA* #15, Dec 1951); Man Who Discovered the Earth! (*MIS* #51, May 1959); Captives of the Eclipse! (*SA* #160, Jan 1964).

#17 (Jun/Jul 1972, 25¢, 52 pgs., Nixon on cover) The Impossible World Named Earth! (*MIS* #30, Feb 1956, text and graphics in certain panels updated to 1972 because of a different President in office); Mystery of the 12 O'clock Man! (*SA* #162, Mar 1962); The Magic Typewriter! (*SA* #31, Apr 1953); The Super-Cook of Space! (*MIS* #56, Dec 1959); Rocketeer For Hire! (*MIS* #11, Dec 1952).

#18 (Aug/Sep 1972, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Hitchhiker of Space! (*MIS* #24, Feb/Mar 1955, Space Cabbie); Man in the Mystery Mask! (*SA* #18, Mar 1952); Who Saved The Earth? (*MIS* #80, Dec 1962, Star Rovers)

#19 (Oct/Nov 1972, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Return of the Neanderthal Man! (*SA* #126, Mar 1961); Paul Revere of Time! (*SA* #77, Feb 1957); Who Went Where--and Why? (*MIS* #83, May 1963, Star Rovers).

#20 (Dec 1972/Jan 1973, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Fisherman from the Sea! (*SA* #105, Jun 1959); Interplanetary Restaurant! (*MIS* #14, Jun/Jul 1953); When Did Earth Vanish? (*MIS* #86, Sep 1963, Star Rovers).

#21 (Oct/Nov 1972, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Raid of the Rogue Star! (*SA* #149, Feb 1963); Ghost Planet! (*SA* #23, Aug 1952); Will The Star Rovers Abandon Earth? (*SA* #159, Dec 1963, Star Rovers).

#22 (Apr/May 1973, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - You Stole Our Planet (*Unexpected* #20, Dec 1957); The Martian Joke (*SA* #24, Sep 1952); How Can Time Be Stopped? (*SA* #163, Apr 1964, Star Rovers).

#23 (Jul/Aug 1973, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Secret Of The Man-Ape! (*SA* #75, Dec 1956); Language-Master of Space! (*MIS* #67, May 1961); World Of Doomed Spacemen! (*SA* #104, May 1959).

#24 (Sep/Oct 1973, 20¢, 32 pgs.) - Man Who Lived Forever! (*SA* #145 Oct 1962); Cartoon That Came To Life (*Unexpected* #1, Feb/Mar 1956); Secret of the Space Jewel! (*SA* #106, Jul 1959, Space Museum).

#25 (Nov/Dec 1973, 20¢, 32 pgs., last issue) - Secret of the Tick-Tock World! (*SA* #109, Oct 1959, Space Museum); Man Who Stole The Earth! (*SA* #47, Aug 1954); Elevator to the Future! (*SA* #94, July 1958).

In closing, I'd like to thank everyone who helped with the research (Mike Tiefenbacher's *Mystery In Space* and *Strange Adventures* Index,) and my daughter, Tiffany, who stayed up to the wee hours of the morning helping me meet my *CBM* #50 deadline. ■

BY SHAWN HAMILTON

Strong Sotheby's Sales Kick Start Summer Convention Season!

As we find ourselves set to jump into the convention season, along comes a kick-off like no one could have anticipated. The Sotheby's auction surprised many, gave encouragement to the market, and only disappointed the few that missed out on their bids! In other areas, three questions are common… Is Gold below $3,000 and higher grade Silver still strong? Are '70s books beginning to receive their due? Is just about every pre-code book from "the lost decade" hot (1946-1955)? The answer from most dealers and collectors is a resounding "Yes!" to all three queries. What ripples will Sotheby's excellent results send into the pool of summer prices? It remains to be seen, but the market seems to be quite a bit stronger than most thought it was.

Pre Golden Age/Golden Age (1933-45)

It seems to be common knowledge that books that go for above $3,000 can be a tough sell in some instances, but below that "glass ceiling" material is moving along well. Every year Sotheby's brings out gorgeous books–many of them restored. In spite of the "anti-restoration nay-sayers," Sotheby's consistently sells these books… and often for record prices! Compare this to dealers and stores that often offer the same books… yet they can sit unsold for up to a year. No one I've interviewed has a logical explanation for this anomaly… but they do concede that Sotheby's is almost single-handedly changing the perception (and acceptability) of restored books in the marketplace.

Yet even in light of the above, it should also be noted that the comic which brought the highest price in the auction was one of the few (only?) unrestored copies of Detective #27 in existence, which sold for a whopping $68,500. Somebody out there obviously still appreciates unrestored books and clearly understands that they are becoming increasingly more difficult to find with each passing year and, hence, more desirable.

Sales: Batman #2 GD/GD+ $900; Blue Beetle #1-5 (Mile High copy) $10,350; Detective #16 VG $1,500, #27 FN $68.500, #28 appFN- $4,600; Flash #1 appFN $6,000; Four Color #9 VG $900 USA #1 VG $1,500; Human Torch #1 VG+ $4,400; Hit #5 GD $510; Marvel Comics #1 (Larson Copy) VF $41,400; Marvel Mystery #2 (Larson Copy) VF+ $16,100; More Fun #55 GD $1,450, #101 appFN $1,500; Mystic #1 FR $790; Pep Comics #26 FN $550; Spy Smasher #1 appFN+ $780; Spotlight #3 VF $350; Sub-Mariner #9 VG $375; Zip #27 FN $350.

Post Golden Age/Pre Silver Age (1946-56)

At the bottom of the rankings over the past twenty years has been the Western genre. It lacked everything collectors looked for in comics. But, don't they all? Many Western genre books feature some of the most violent stories and outrageous Good Girl art ever published… and most of it uncited. Check out just one of the many examples… Outlaws #3. This book will change your mind about Westerns. A number of these books were extensions of the Fox Good Girl titles with the same "Fox styles" on the interior. When the hunt for these obscure gems really gets moving, you can say you read it here first! I'm already wondering what undiscovered material is out there… just waiting to be documented.

Sales: Astonishing #22 VF/NM $180; Beware #8 VF/NM $190; Crime Mysteries #4 FN- $200; Haunted Thrills #11 FN $90; Hollywood Confessions #2 VF $175; Moon Girl #3 G/VG $105; More Fun #127 FN/VF $180; Popular Teenagers 39 NM $240; Personal Love #27 FN $110; Sad Sack #1 GD $78; Secret Loves #2 FN $65; Sensation #107

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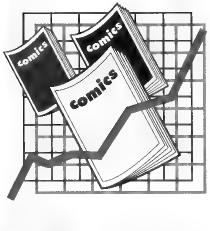

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Anticipation of the San Diego Con is running high all over the state. Sales are slow as wary buyers are saving their hard-earned pennies (or more) for the greener pastures of So. Cal's annual buying event. I must admit, I too am looking forward to shopping for my own collection in those famed halls of treasures. The S.F. Bay area's WonderCon was the last vestige of big sales before money hoarding for Comic Con began in earnest.

Sales: Avengers #3 VG $625; Captain America #14 GD+ (tape on spine) $350, #40 GD+ $200; Fantastic #4, 7 (both) NM- $900, 9 VF/NM $700 (to a dealer); Forbidden Worlds #2 GD+ $50; Lone Ranger #1 VF- $300, Pioneer West Romances VG+ $32; Roy Rogers #1 VG+ $150; Sensation #53 VG+ $75, Showcase #9 GD- $100, #10 GD- $350; Superman #17 FR+ $100, Superboy #15 VG+ $130; DC War (too many to recall, all grades, mostly one customer)

SOTHEBY'S AUCTION REPORT

BY JON BERK & MICHAEL NAIMAN

On June 13-14, 1997, Sotheby's held its annual auction of comic books and comic art. Although this is the seventh sale, we still haven't gotten used to the fact that comic books are being auctioned in New York City right in the shadow of fine art and furniture. The amount of material that was offered for sale was truly staggering. Jerry Weist continues to amaze collectors all over the country with

Continued on page 70

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MARKET REPORTS

Continued from page 68

the material that he aquires for the annual Sotheby's auction "event."

It was worth attending this year... just for the atmosphere and to listen to the "buzz." As many of you know, some have raised questions regarding the health of the secondary market. We share the impression expressed by most of the attendees... namely that it was a strong auction! No particular crazy prices but strong prices obtained for much of the material. It is always indicative of a strong auction when many of the lots go to collectors rather than dealers looking for weaker lots to make a profit on.

Golden Age: there was no question that the most contested bidding was for "single digit" Actions. Even though there were multiple offerings of several of these issues, the prices paid for all were easily over the higher auction estimate. A lower grade Action #2 and 3 went for $11,500; #5 and 11 for $6,900, restored FN #4 for $2,150; etc. Surprisingly, an unrestored Action #1 in GD+ sold for $37,950 .. while a minimally restored Action #1 VF- sold for only $46,000. A most amazing lot was the $9,775 paid for a Superman #1 with a detached cover and missing center-fold! Unrestored high grade early Flashes did well, as did the FN copy of Detective #27 which sold for $68,500.

The biggest bargain of the auction had to be the Larson copy of Marvel #1 that sold for $41,400. It just seems that this book cannot generate the excitement that an Action #1 or a Detective #27 continue to generate. However, the other Larson copies of Marvel Mystery sold quite nicely.

Sales: Action #1 AppVF- $46,000, #5 GD- $1,725, #10 GD $1,840, #6,8,9 (the lot) AppFN $4,025; Adventure #48 AppFN- $2,300, #72 AppFN+ $1,610, #103 FN $1,265; All American #18,20 FN $1,725, All-Star #1 AppVG- $1,265, #3 AppFN $4,312, Amazing Spider-Man #1 VF+ $9,775, #14 NM $2,587, Batman #1 AppFN+ $10,350; Big All-American Comic Book AppGD+ $1,265.

Captain America #1 FN $11,500, #1 VG- $6,900, #7 FN- $920, Daredevil #1 & 2 (the lot) NM- (Mile High) $10,350, Detective #27 FN $68,500, #28 AppFN- $4,600, #31 AppFN+ $4,025, #33 AppFN $4,025, #34 VG+ $1,265, #38 AppFN- $4,025, #54 VF $1,150; Detective Picture Stories #1, 5 (the lot) AppVG- $1,035; Flash Comics #1 AppVG+ $4,887, #3, 4 (the lot) FN- $1,840, #86 VF+ (Mile High) $7,475, Four Color #16 VG $1,265

Green Lantern (Golden Age) #1 VG- $3,162, #2 FN+ $1,380, #3-7 (the lot) AppFN $1,610, Incredible Hulk #1 FN+ $2,587; Jackie Robinson Comic Book #1, 3-6 (the lot) FN+ $920; Journey Into Mystery #84-100 (the lot) FN+ $1,840; Marvel Comics #1 VF+ (Larson) $41,400, #1 AppVG+ $19,550; Marvel Mystery Comics #2 VF+ (Larson) $16,100, #3 VF+ (Larson) $11,500, #4 FN+ (Larson) $3,737, Master Comics #22, 23 (the lot) VF $3,450; More Fun #59 VG $805.

Police Comics #1 FN- $1,840; Sensation #1 AppVG $9,070, Showcase #1, 2, 3, 5 (the lot) VG+ $1,610, #6, 7, 11, 12 (the lot) FN- $1,495, #15-21, 25, 26 (the lot) FN- $1,955, Superboy #1 FN- $1,610; Superman #3, 4, 5 (the lot) VG+ $1,955; Tales of Suspense #39 VF $2,587; Walt Disney's Comics & Stories #1 VG- $1,380; World's Finest #2-7 (the lot) VG+ $1,840

It was very gratifying to see spirited bidding on "The Other Guys" (non-DC, non-Timely books). Fox Wonderworlds and Fantastics did quite well, as did most of the Fiction House lots. Nedor books (Excitings, Thrillings, Black Terror, etc.), Quality titles and even strip reprint lots showed surprising strength. It is indicative of a sound market when interest remains keen in these second and third tier companies. Any market weakness that exists was reflected in some of the prices paid for Planets and Fawcetts.

While the Mile High/Edgar Church books that were in the auction sold easily, the prices of about 2 x Guide show why some feel private placement may be a better outlet to move these pedigree books.

Generally, Silver Age seemed to sell well. One lot of DC war books (Our Army at War) sold well over the higher estimate. It is safe to say that the Silver Age side of the comic book marketplace showed good strength and plenty of resiliency.

However, the ultimate highlight of the auction was the chance to go out with 25 collectors and some significant others for supper (arranged by Steve "New York is my town" Borock). It is this personal side where gossip, buys and info is exchanged that makes the hobby so much fun. ■

Collectors should note that the opinions expressed in CBM Market Reports are solely those of the individual dealers and collectors who contribute them. Seasoned hobbyists are acutely aware that prices vary based on geographic location, time of year, and a number of other marketplace factors.

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Silver Age (1956-69)

Welcome back. The core of the hobby has now returned to whence they came… and Silver Age readers are buying once again. Not that they ever disappeared, they just were priced out of the market since '92. Multiples of Guide for non Near Mint books? Sotheby's bidders flashed back to '92 and ran those prices way up. How will this change the market, or will it? This trend has most experts baffled, so stay tuned for more information.

Sales: Amazing Fantasy #15 FR $810; Fantastic Four #1 FR $990; Harvey Hits #15 VF $100; JLA. #29 VF $100; Lois Lane #1 GD+ $220; Marvel Tales #159 VF/NM $148; Mystery In Space #9 VF/M $1,200; Our Army At War #85 VF/NM $310; Phantom Stranger #1 NM $85; Plastic Man #1 VF/NM $78; Secret Six #1 NM $65; Showcase #15 FN $485; Sick #1 VF $98; Silver Surfer #1 NM $595; X-Men #3 GD $75, #14 VF+ $148.

Bronze Age (1970-79)

Many collectors report high hopes that convention dealers will finally bring their inventories of early 1970's books (especially the DC 48 and 52 pagers) to conventions this Summer. Maybe last year's promise will be fulfilled this year… but so far at the smaller regional conventions it hasn't happened.

Unreal records are being set left and right, and while other genres hope to go about their business quietly for fear of party crashers, '70s collectors have found that a few stores are still in denial regarding these books, even though the "Bronze Boob" is common knowledge for most nationwide… I guess we'll have to keep shouting about this material "from the rafters."

Sales: Adventure Into Fear #19 VF $12; Demon #1 NM $32; Fear #1 VF/NM $26; Four Star Battle #1 VF/NM $12; Homer The Happy Ghost #1 FN+ $120 ; Human Torch #1 NM $12; Spidey #1 NM $12; Jimmy Olsen #141 NM $15; Man Thing #1 NM $18; Marvel Spotlight #2 VF+ $100; My Love #1 VF $85; Night Nurse #4 VF/NM $75; Phantom Stranger #23 NM $22; Pink Panther #1 VF/NM $40; Ringo Kid #1 NM $28; Secrets Of Haunted House #10 NM $18; Underdog #1 VF $40; Where Monsters Dwell #1 NM $20.

Is the market still in flux? Or has it taken its breather and resumed a new and different direction? Certainly the number of collectors willing to spend over $2,000 for a book has diminished somewhat, but that does not mean they are not willing to spend that same amount on a group of books. Collectors love their comics and rarely wake up one day and decide to end their collecting pursuits. They will always go to new areas of interest that intrigue them… and willingly spend their money there. Although it was short lived, we did see a lull after the Silver boom and before Gold began its recent peak. You just never know where those pesky collectors are going to turn up next. Looks like a bunch of them showed up at Sotheby's!

Now for 20 more books that presently Guide for less than market Values:

- #1 Night Nurse #4 (NM Guide $10, Market $30-50)
- #2 The Saint #4 (NM Guide $195, Market $235-325)
- #3 Fantastic #3 (Guide $4,500, Market 75-100% higher is all grades)
- #4 Jackpot #4 (NM Guide $1,800, Market $2,200-2,800)
- #5 Our Fighting Forces #123 (NM Guide $10, Market $20-40)
- #6 G.I. Combat #87 (NM Guide $350, Market $425-550)
- #7 Homer the Happy Ghost #1-5 (NM Guide $10 ea., Market $20 ea.)
- #8 Fighting Yank #21 (NM Guide $300, Market $380-450)
- #9 Young Love #107 (NM Guide $2, Market $35-85)
- #10 My Secret Life #22 (NM Guide $50, Market $95-150).

On a final market note, consider this year's Chicago Con. Quite a number of collectors have voiced their concerns that Wizard's marketing approach has overemphasized "modern" creators and appeared to diminish (or even eliminate) the role of Golden Age and Silver Age guests (just look at their advertised guest list). Potential convention goers who are Gold and Silver collectors may interpret this reduced emphasis to mean that less older material will be available in the dealers' room. If less buyers show up, purveyors of Silver and Gold may sell less and think twice about attending future Chicago Cons… starting an ever-downward spiral. I think it would be a real shame for the second largest comic book convention to virtually exclude Golden Age and Silver Age creators and take the chance of alienating the army of Gold and Silver collectors. If you feel my concerns are well founded, please write via CBM. (Or better yet, perhaps write to Wizard's Chicago Con and let them know how you feel!) I'd like to hear what you have to say. ■

COMING NEXT MONTH IN CBM

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Plus: **CBM celebrates 20 years of the Mile High collection!**

MARKETPLACE MAIL

Continued from page 15

Woody's Kite Book

Came across some books that are not listed in the Overstreet or the Gerber Photo Journal. First is a Woody Woodpecker Giveaway from 1956. The title is "Woody Woodpecker's Kite Book." The book is about how to fly a kite properly and talks about staying away from power lines. The copies I own have Illinois Power Company stamped (printed?) on the cover, in a box designed for such a marking. The book is the same size as March of Comics. The cover is made of regular paper. I am curious about any information you may have about this book.

In Overstreet under Super-Dooper Comics he has #1-4 listed with "exist?". I would like to confirm the existence of issues #1,2,3. The copies I have are plain paper covers. In the Photo Journal there are no pictures of these books, the pictures start with #5.

For your information, the covers are identical to #5, 6, 7 respectively except the number in the upper left hand corner. If you would like I can scan in the covers of any of these books so you can see what they look like. I am curious as to why they are listed with "exist?". Again, any information would be greatly appreciated.

Brent Neef, Illinois

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Looking for back issues

Hi, I must say that after reading just about every comic publication on the market for the past 10 years, CBM has consistently shown that it is the cream of the crop. It amazes me that each month you outdo yourself with the quality of the magazine and the insightful articles, not to mention the fabulous color cover gallery - it makes me want to run out and buy those issues! As a result of my praise for your magazine, I would like to pick up a few of your back issues. Are the following still available? CBM #42 (Joe Kubert Tribute), #43 (Comic Heroes at the Movies), #45 (Justice League), #47 (DC War Books), and #48 (Patriotic Heroes). Thanks and I look forward to your response.

Jim Lowery, Illinois

The only CBMs still available from us are #27, 36, 41-43, 45-49. Everything else is sold out. Many collectors around the country tell us that they sell and trade CBM back issues, and at nominal prices. Also, Bud Plant (800-242-6642) still has a number of back issues and Bud is famous for really good service.

Kudos

Please accept my kudos as I too find CBM to be my most eagerly awaited periodical! Even though the new comics haven't kept my interest, the great info in your magazine certainly keeps me hunting for back issues.

Carl Weed, New York

Action #1178-3Z

Just finished CBM #47. Once again CBM tops my must read list every month. I have been a reader the entire run, however, this is the first time I have written. A couple of issues seem to pop up every few months:

1) Seems like nearly every month some dealer is bellyachin' and boo hoolin' he isn't selling books above Guide prices. So what! He probably didn't pay more than Guide when he bought them. He may be one of those dreaded combination graders (VG/NM).

The typical ad reads: Half of front cover missing but color is so stunning on the half that is left and only 2 coupons (1 story page, 1 non-story page) missing. Book greatly undervalued in Guide, then the book is priced at 90% of near mint price. Oh I could write a page on misleading ads. Now hold on, I know it's just a Guide--it wasn't handed to Moses on Mt. Sinai.

2) How much I paid for a book seems to be the latest rage. I paid *(Continued on page 74)*

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737FB	7 ⅛ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	11	38	152	68
750FB	7 ½ x 10 ½	Gold Age Comics	12	40	159	70
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825FB	8 ¼ x 10 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	13	45	178	76

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825M2	8 ¼ x 11 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	14	46	185	74
875M2	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	15	50	198	78

Bundles are boxed. Others are professionally packed in shrinkwrap

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725M	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics	17	75	120	1000 95
775M	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	18	76	122	1000 105
800M	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	19	77	123	1000 110
825M	8 ¼ x 10 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	19	78	124	1000 110

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4 mil Mylar® D Opening edges offset for ease of entry

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775MY	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	6.25	19	63	250	110
800MY	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	6.50	20	66	264	115
825MY	8 ¼ x 10 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	7.25	22	73	290	130
875MY	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	7.50	23	75	298	130

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4 mil Mylar® D with flaps.

Cat#	Size	Description	Price per: 10	50	200	(500) 1000	Bundle
700S	7 x 10 ½	Current Comics	50	$18	$63	$265	$ 10
725S	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics	6.25	19	65	275	125
775S	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	7	21	70	280	130
800S	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	7.50	23	74	295	135
825S	8 ¼ x 10 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	8.25	25	82	330	140
875S	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	9	27	89	356	150

TOPS!™

4 mil Mylar® D. with safety beads Can be sealed with Slip-Locks ™

Cat#	Size	Description	Price per: 10	50	200	(500) 1000	Bundle
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725T	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics	7.25	22	72	288	130
775T	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	7.50	23	74	294	135
800TSL	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	8	26	86	343	
825TSL	8 ¼ x 11 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	9.50	29	95	380	140
875T	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	9	28	91	363	155
SL	Slip-Lock	matches width of sleeve opening	5	15	50	198	

SLIM-LOK™

4 mil Mylar® D with pre folded flaps.

Cat#	Size	Description	Price per: 10	50	200	(500) 1000
700SHL	7 x 10 ½	Current Comics	$8	$23	$76	$304
725SHL	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics	8.50	26	80	317
775SHL	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	8.75	25	83	330
800SHL	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	9	26	86	343
825SHL	8 ¼ x 11 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	9.50	29	95	380
875SHL	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	10.50	31	102	410

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Cat#	Size	Description	Price per: 5	25	100	500
700BT	7 x 10 ½	Current Comics	$5	$15	$50	$198
725BT	7 ¼ x 10 ½	Standard Comics	5.25	16	51	205
775BT	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	5.50	17	55	218
800BT	8 x 11 ½	Gold Age Comics	6	18	58	231
825BT	8 ¼ x 11 ½	Super Gold Age Comics	6.25	19	61	240
875BT	8 ¾ x 11 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	6.50	20	65	250
SL	Slip-Locks	matches width of sleeve opening	3	8	27	104

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725DC	725T		Standard Comics	6 ⅞ x 10		$10.50	$175	$749
775DC	775T		Silver/Gold Comics	7 ¼ x 10 ½		19.75	176	775
825DC	825T		Gold Age Comics	7 ¾ x 10 ½		19.95	177	788

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Cat#	Size	Description	Price per: 10	100
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700UVS	7 x 10 ½	Standard Comics	8	59
750UVS	7 ½ x 10 ½	Silver/Gold Comics	9	64
758UVS	7 ½ x 10 ½	Gold Age Comics	10	71
778UVS	7 ¾ x 10 ½	Super Gold Comics	11	**75**
875UVS	8 ¾ x 10 ½	Large Comics, Mags & Letter	12	80

We also carry UV-Tops!, Oxy-Sorb, Vapor-Sorb, Art-Sorb & Dry-Pack, De-acidification Sheets, Double-faced Archival Tape & Document Repair Tape.

46 x Guide for Milk-Boy #6 because it is the first comic book with the word 'milk' on it, and it came out 3 weeks before Popsicle Man, so therefore it crosses over into one of the four food groups before Action #1178-3Z. So based on the aforementioned information, I gladly paid $12.36 for it and would have paid more.

How about I just liked the book. How can I justify paying that much for a book just because I liked it? Hah! What a concept!

Honestly, if we're just in this hobby for the money, we really should invest in real estate. I don't know about you, but I believe five acres of ocean front property will rise in value faster than Milk-Nerd #8. Greg White really hit the nail on the head in the market reports–does anyone remember when comic value wasn't the reason we enjoyed this hobby so much? I have more memories swapping and trading comics with my fellow comic hobbyists than I'll ever have of paying 12 x Guide for a near mint coverless copy of Milk-Dork #3.

Well that's about it for now. My soap box is starting to creak and moan, besides, I've got to change the mylar sleeve on my Super Mystery Comics Vol. #6, issue #3–it may be the first comic book cover showing a paper cutter being used to chop someone in half!

P.S. I think you did an outstanding job answering Anna's letter. I can't tell you how many times in the past year I have seen a dealer or store owner blow off or ignore a child's question. If we don't bring the young folks into our hobby, then all the knowledge we have unearthed about our paper treasures will be lost to the next generation. I applaud your efforts. Stand up and take a bow.

Soapbox Dave (Morrow), Kentucky

Marvel this, DC that

I just finished reading CBM #48, June '97 and enjoyed every article in the magazine. I've been collecting comics for over 25 years and have never found a magazine "advanced" enough for me. No, I do not have a Ph.D. in comics (I'd love to have one though). What I mean by advanced is not "how to start collecting comics" but more about the background/history of comics, etc. Over the decades I've read Steranko's History of Comics, All In Color For A Dime, Marvel this, Marvel that, DC this and DC that, etc. I have never read a monthly mag like yours.

I have picked up your mag here and there until three months ago when I started to get it steadily. Every time loving what I read. In your latest issue (#48) you started off with an excellent story in your Letter from the Editor. My parents never threw away my books either but they did frown a lot.

Four-Color Sea was an interesting article on information I knew little about plus I would not have looked it up on my own, thanks. ...Patriotic Heroes... loved it, loved it, loved it! I'm a Super Patriot and love Captain America the most. I've always enjoyed reading reprints of the Shield, Uncle Sam, The *(Continued on page 77)*

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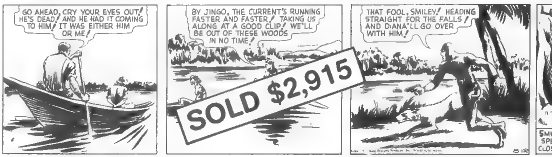
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Patriot, Fighting Yank, and of course Cap. I knew much of the information written but there was a lot I learned. Love it, love it, love it!

Nick Cardy "WOW" what can you say?! I knew a little of his work but again, "WOW"–what he has contributed. The best part of an interview like this is the history we get. I'm fascinated with hearing about the 1930s, '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s, before and after, yes everything. It's interesting to hear about the atmosphere the writers and artists worked in, how the war changed things, how the end of the war also changed things, and so on.

Strange Sports Stories was a fun article to read, Carmine Infantino had a unique style. I have a few of these issues. Joe Shuster, well, what can we say about him. Obviously a great person and artist who as the article said, "knew how to use a page." The industry used him, abused and threw him away. They made a small amount of amends later.

National Comics–if I lived in the '40s then they would have been my favorite, (besides Cap) I always liked kicking the butt of the ever hateful Nazis. Love it, love it, love it. What beautiful color pages you reprinted, and the centerfold, "WOW" again. I would have paid $4.95 (minus my store discount) just for them. I like the centerfold so much that I may have it copied, framed and put in my office.

The article on Ray Cummings written by Will Murray was very nice. I learned a lot about his background and of course enjoyed the Cap references. The Time Machine article was excellent. I was enthralled by the comics in the stand and went through trying to name the issues and see the numbers when I realized you had the information already printed! (Duh!) Hey, print the pictured Atlas wire rack #529 (with comic) in color as a centerfold. "WOW" yet again–what a blow up that would make!

I have not mentioned every article that was in this issue but let me say that they were all good and interesting. I can do nothing but praise your magazine, its editor, writers, etc. I will be picking up your mag for the foreseeable future.

Thanks again for the great reading adventure–that's what this is all about.

John Edgeworth, North Carolina

We must be doing something right!

Popeye #5

Recently, I went to a NYC Craftsmen (club for graphic arts communication printing professionals) meeting at Glen Falls, NY. While there I shopped around and visited an antiques store. As I was checking out the wares, I thought to myself "it would be nice if I discover some old Golden Age comics." As fate would have it, I found a 1937 Popeye #5 comic book published by Features Books! That was the only comic in the entire shop.

The condition is *(Continued on page 79)*

Ever wonder...

...what your favorite comic creator looked like?

...or how their name is pronounced?

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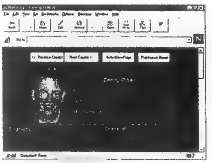

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VG-, the comic is 8 1/2" x 11 1/4", about 72 pages, black and white text with reprints of newspaper comic strips dated 1934-36, and full color cover with ten cents indicia. The pages are tan, but not brittle or brown. Four loose center pages, but none are missing. MY GOD this comic book is SOLID!!!

The comic strips are by Popeye creator Segar!!! Did I read it? Yes, I did! The owner of the comic purchased it at the local pharmacy 60 years ago! She sold it to the antique store along with other items.

The comic book is listed in the Overstreet Guide at $650 in NM, yah right, good luck. There's no way a collector or dealer will want to sell a NM pre-Golden Age comic at that price. The Gerber Book doesn't have any mention of this Popeye book, I wonder why? Maybe it's that rare? Anyway, that's my little war story on my comic book find. Keep up the good work fellows.

Felix (the Mad Collector) Lugo, New York

Action Comics Miniature

I'm delighted with Comic Book Marketplace month after month. Your publication does what great fan magazines should do… enhances my enjoyment of the hobby, educates me to new facts, you literally make me want to reread my favorite Golden and Silver Age comics again and go out to buy more!

Gene Evans asked in CBM #48 about Harvey's copyright lines. Casper, Wendy and Baby Huey were created by Paramount Pictures cartoon department, originally known as Famous Studios, while Richie Rich and Hot Stuff were original Harvey creations. Though Harvey owned all the characters, the animated characters were part of an elaborate deal with Paramount and ABC Network and were separated for legal purposes.

I have a question, which I posed in a published letter in Comic Buyers Guide over 15 years ago, and my question is still unanswered. Does anyone have Action Comics Miniature from 1947? It's listed in Overstreet, but in over 25 years of collecting and attending comic book conventions coast to coast, I've never seen this item. Has anyone ever seen a physical copy of this giveaway? The cover is pictured in the press-book for the Vigilante Columbia movie serial. What are the contents of this comic?

In the meantime, keep up the good work

Jerry Beck, California

It does exist… I have seen at least a half dozen copies over the year. This interesting DC collectible contains only a Vigilante story and cover and (regrettably) no Superman at all. It was originally designed as a premium for theater owners to give away as a promotion for the Vigilante movie serial. Keep looking… I'm confidant you'll be able to find one.

Great deal of history

Just wanted to thank you for the latest issue of Comic Book Marketplace. Even though I haven't read the whole issue, I was greatly impressed with the Nick Cardy interview, a true professional who has never been interviewed before and had some truly interesting and funny stories to tell. I applaud you for tracking Mr. Cardy down and was impressed with his knowledge and stories of the business and its characters (many of whom are more interesting than the books themselves). I hope you will continue to search out many of the forgotten talents of the comic book world. Perhaps a George Tuska interview could be arranged as his work spans many decades and companies.

Yours is one of the few comics-oriented publications that holds any interest for me. The

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MARKETPLACE MAIL

Comics Journal has its own particular niche, as does the Jack Kirby Collector, but your magazine has a good balance of articles and interviews. I enjoy your theme issues, especially ones devoted to specific artists, e.g. Steranko, Wood and Eisner. Now we are in desperate need of Ditko and Everett theme issues . . . and issues focusing on different genres (like western and romance). There is a great deal of history to unearth, and I hope more can be explored in the pages of Comic Book Marketplace every month. Continued success.

Nicholas Caputo, New York

Thanks Mr. Cardy

Thank you so very much for publishing John Coates' interview with Nick Cardy. I've been trying to find out more about the man and his work for years, writing to publishers, canvassing fan/interview magazines, buttonholing professionals at conventions, and none of it ever gaining me more than a smattering of knowledge about him. So thank you again to all involved.

It's hard to separate out a genuine appreciation for his talent from the emotional resonances attached to it because of my own childhood associations. But his last issue of Aquaman is one of my favourite comics ever! I'm onto my third copy and the cover is starting to come off this one as I am continually rereading it–gorgeous stuff. And the run of covers he produced for the title after leaving it–lovely fluid design work, completely inspirational.

I'd love to see him do some new comics work, the recent Wonder Woman pinup was a nice surprise, but being just an isolated character, drawing it hardly showcased his real talent which is getting to the dramatic heart of an incident and relating the characters in beautifully rhythmic and organic ways–lovely stuff, and from the interview he comes across as a warm human being too. So thanks to you all again, and especially to Mr. Cardy himself for the pleasure and inspiration his work has given me over the years. I wish him well for the future whatever he does.

Ian Cairns, England

Thanks to everyone who took the time to write . . . we really enjoy your letters! Please note letters maybe edited for content and space. Please send you correspondence to CBM's Marketplace mail, P.O. Box 180700, Coronado, CA 92178 or FAX (619) 437-1993. Email us at: cbmktpl@ix.netcom.com

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SILVER AGE... GOLDEN HEROES!

Greetings! What follows is a little chronology I put together some years ago. It's a list of the first 26 appearances of Golden Age DC characters in the Silver Age. The reason for initially doing this was two fold: to correct a great deal of misinformation that was circulating in guides and of fan magazines and because these books are incredibly cool to look at even today. I still get goose bumps every time I see *Showcase* #60 and who can forget their first read of *Flash* #123, 129, and 137 or *JLA* #21 and 22? I know I'll always remember...

1960 - 1) *Brave & Bold* #30 (Jul 1960) Letters page has list of original members JSA from *All-Star* #3 and last group from *All-Star* #57.

1961 - 2) *Flash* #123 (Sep 1961) First actual reappearance of a Golden Age character, Flash; 3) *Showcase* #34 (Oct 1961) First picture of original JSA from cover of *All-Star* #3. Detailed origin of Golden Age Atom.

1962 - 4) *Flash* #129 (Jun 1962) Second Golden Age Flash. First appearance of JSA in a panel in a Silver Age story. JSA members seen while Golden Age Flash is thinking about them (Atom, Hawkman, Green Lantern, Black Canary, Dr. Midnite.)

1963 - 5) *Flash* #137 (Jun 1963) Third Golden Age Flash. First Vandall Savage. Here they come! First actual reappearance of JSA (Atom, Green Lantern, Hawkman, Dr. Midnite, Wonder Woman, no Black Canary, first Johnny Thunder). Johnny Thunder is not in *Flash* #129; 6) *Justice League Of America* #21 (Aug 1963) Fourth Golden Age Flash. First meeting of JSA and JLA. First Hourman, Black Canary, Dr. Fate. Where'd Wonder woman go? 7) *Justice League Of America* #22 (Sep 1963) Continuation of *JLA* #21.

1964 - 8) *Justice League Of America* #29 (Aug 1964) First reappearance of Starman. Rest of JSA also (Atom, Flash, Green Lantern, Dr. Fate, Dr. Midnite, Hawkman, Black Canary; 9) *Justice League Of America* #30 (Sep 1964) Continuation of *JLA* #29.

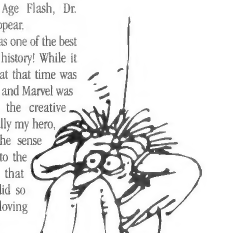
1965 - 10) *Flash* #151 (Mar 1965) Golden Age Flash appearance; 11) *Showcase* #55 (Apr 1965) First Silver Age book totally devoted to Golden Age characters. Origins Dr. Fate and Hourman in text. First Solomon Grundy. Fifth appearance of the Golden Age Green Lantern; 12) *Showcase* #56 (Jun 1965) First Psycho Pirate. Continuation of *Showcase* #55; 13) *Justice League Of America* #37 (Aug 1965) First Mr. Terrific. Rest of JSA appear... Atom, Flash, Green Lantern, Hawkman, and Dr. Fate; 14) *Justice League Of America* #38 (Sep 1965) Continuation of *JLA* #37; 15) *Brave & Bold* #61 (Sep 1965) First appearance of the Mist. 1965 Origin of Starman and Black Canary in text. Reprints the covers of *Adventure* #61 and *Flash* #92. Considered by many collectors (along with *Showcase* #60) to be one the best Silver Age covers featuring Golden Age characters; 16) *Brave & Bold* #62 (Oct 1965) First Wildcat. Continuation of *B&B* #61; 17) *Green Lantern* #40 (Oct 1965) First Crisis. Origin of Guardians, and origin of Golden Age Green Lantern.

1966 - 18) *Showcase* #60 (Feb 1966) Origin and first appearance of Spectre in the Silver Age. "The Most Important Comic Book Event in 20 Years." I dunno... maybe this is the best cover??!!; 19) *Showcase* #61 (Apr 1966) Spectre, continuation of *Showcase* #60; 20) *Green Lantern* #45 (Jun 1966) Golden Age Green Lantern; 21) *Justice League Of America* #46 (Aug 1966) First Sandman! Rest of JSA (Black Canary, Spectre, Dr. Fate, Wildcat, Dr. Midnite.) appears; 22) *Justice League Of America* #47 (Sep 1966) Continuation of *JLA* #46; 23) *Showcase* #64 (Oct 1966) Spectre.

1967 - 24) *Atom* #29 (Mar 1967) First cross-over Golden Age Atom into Silver Age Atom's book; 25) *Green Lantern* #52 (Apr 1967) Golden Age Green Lantern appears; 26) *Flash* #170 (May 1967) Golden Age Flash, Dr. Midnite, and Dr. Fate appear.

The first 26 Silver Age DC books featuring Golden Age characters!

I think 1961-1966 was one of the best periods of comic book history! While it could be said that DC at that time was marching backward... and Marvel was marching forward... the creative geniuses at DC (especially my hero, Julie Schwartz) had the sense and talent to go back to the original characters that made DC great, and did so with a wonderful and loving flair. I'm eternally grateful he did... Thanks Julie! ■



A Chronology by Dr. J. Keith Contarino